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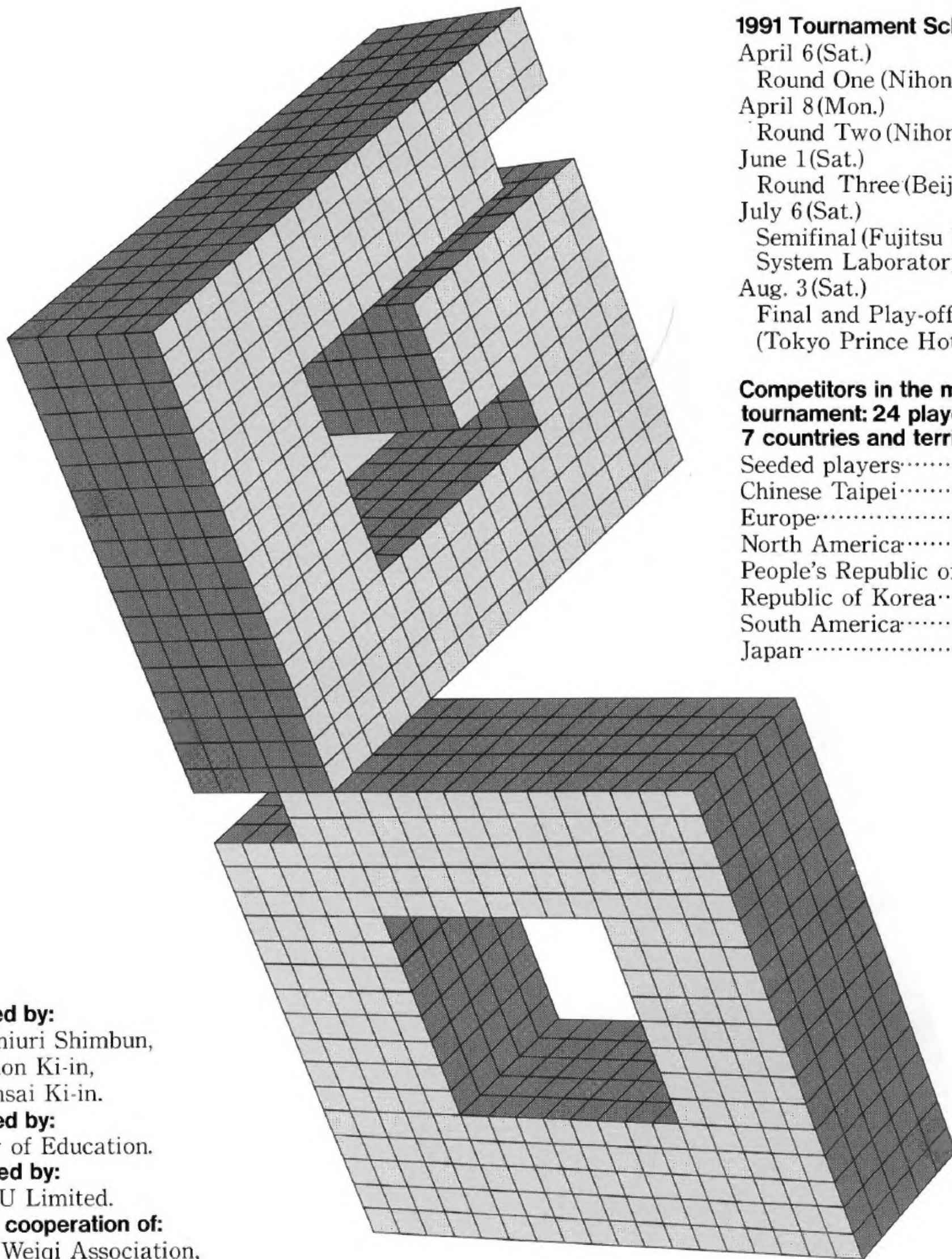


THE ISHI PRESS



The 4th World Go Championship The Fujitsu Cup

The game of go, a part of traditional Japanese culture, is now played and loved in some 50 countries around the world, and the number of go fans totals several tens of millions. In sponsoring this tournament, Fujitsu's aim is to contribute to the popularization of go and to strengthen the bonds of friendship among the people of the world.



1991 Tournament Schedule

April 6 (Sat.)
Round One (Nihon Ki-in)
April 8 (Mon.)
Round Two (Nihon Ki-in)
June 1 (Sat.)
Round Three (Beijing, China)
July 6 (Sat.)
Semifinal (Fujitsu Kansai
System Laboratory)
Aug. 3 (Sat.)
Final and Play-off for 3rd
(Tokyo Prince Hotel)

Competitors in the main tournament: 24 players from 7 countries and territories

Seeded players	3
Chinese Taipei	2
Europe	1
North America	1
People's Republic of China	5
Republic of Korea	4
South America	1
Japan	7

Organized by:

The Yomiuri Shimbun,
The Nihon Ki-in,
The Kansai Ki-in.

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With the cooperation of:

Chinese Weiqi Association,
Korean Baduk Association,
Chinese Taipei Weichi Association,
American Go Association,
European Go Federation,
The Nihon Ki-in, Do Brasil S/C LTDA,
Japan Air Lines.

The Fujitsu logo, featuring the word "FUJITSU" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized infinity symbol or "F" shape above the "J".

Featured Articles in this Issue

Honinbo and Meijin Titles

In this issue we feature two title matches, one a disaster for Kobayashi Koichi, the other a triumph. In the Honinbo title match he fell victim to a remorseless fightback by Cho Chikun, who showed once again how dangerous he is when he seems to be cornered. In the first half of the title match, presented in our previous issue, everything went Kobayashi's way, but in the second half he couldn't do a thing right.

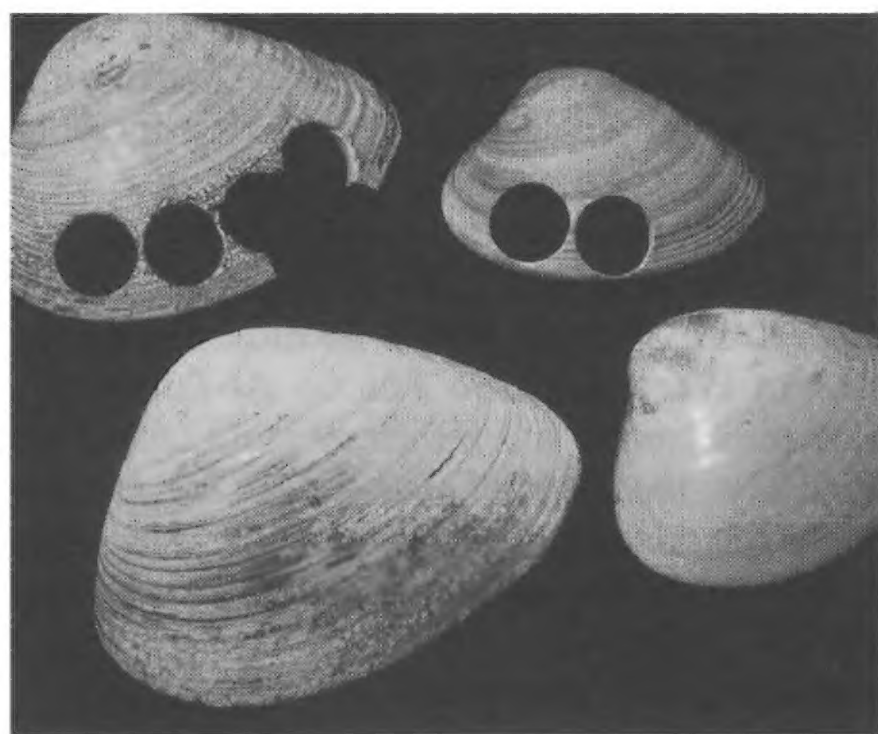
Kobayashi's bad form carried over to the Meijin title match, in which he started out badly against an unusually determined Otake. After he made a joseki mistake in the fourth game, the score could easily have been 3-1 in the challenger's favour. How Kobayashi turned the match around is described in detail in our report.

The highlight of the Meijin title match was perhaps Kobayashi's defiance of the go proverb in giving his opponent a ponnuki in the 5th game. A ponnuki is said to be worth 30



Kobayashi — no respect for the go proverbs.

points, especially when it's facing the centre, as it was in this case. Kobayashi won the game and giving away ponnukis seems to have become a habit: he did it again in the third game of the 1991 Kisei match. Maybe it's time to revise the proverb.



The Cover

The background story to our cover is described in detail on the next page. Here we would just like to apologise for placing the go board on the back cover. When the go scene is on the left-hand panel of a two-panel print, the only alternative is to give a mirror-image reproduction to get the go board on the front

Go Equipment

The second part of our article *In Pursuit of Elegance* deals with go stones and bowls. If you are considering making a major investment in go equipment, you should read this article first. If you are just interested in the aesthetic values concerned and the criteria for judging the value of equipment, our article should also be of interest. The photo on the left shows clam shells used for making the white stones.

cover. When we did this before, with the cover of GW19, we received indignant letters pointing out that the Chinese characters on the print were back-to-front (no one objected to the player placing a stone with his left hand). We have therefore decided that it is preferable to give a faithful representation of the print.

The Cover: Apparition of the Spider Princess

by William Pinckard

Raiko and the Ground-Spider

Raiko, more formally known as Minamoto no Yorimitsu (944–1021), was a warrior of noble birth around whom gathered many legends celebrating his exploits in ridding the country of a variety of robbers, demons and ogres. One of these demons was known as Tsuchigumo, 'Ground-Spider'. Folklorists think the name may denote a real person, possibly a brigand who made his headquarters in a cave. In the stories, however, Tsuchigumo is a monstrous arachnid notorious for luring travellers into the subterranean cavern where he dwells, and dining on their blood.

Two of these legends contributed ideas to the theater, and from the theater to woodblock prints connected with go. In one of these legends Raiko and his lieutenant Watanabe no Tsuna are out on the moors investigating the strange apparition of a huge skull in the sky. They come to the hut of a man-eating hag known as Yamamba. With her lives a boy known as Kaidomaru, brought up among animals and endowed with superhuman strength. At the boy's own request Raiko receives him as a retainer and bestows on him the name of Kintoki.

Continuing their search, the small band enters a cavern beneath the hut. They make their way past a threatening host of goblins and at length encounter a mysterious woman of baleful beauty. As Raiko studies her he feels himself becoming enmeshed in a net of cobwebs and realizes that he is being bewitched. He cuts through the net with his sword, wounding the woman. She vanishes, for she was nothing more than an emanation sent out by the spider-demon himself. They follow a trail of ichor deeper into the cavern, and at the end they find the horrible Ground-Spider, which Raiko kills after a violent battle.

In the other legend Raiko is suffering from a mysterious debilitating ailment and is sleeping in his own mansion. He is guarded by Watanabe no Tsuna, two other retainers named Urabe no Suetake and Usui Sadamitsu, and by the former Kaidomaru, who is now dignified with the name Sakata no Kintoki and who is always shown in prints (and on the stage) as a burly and choleric warrior with a red face.

Two of them pass the time by playing go. A goblin appears, sent by the King of Demons (one of Tsuchigumo's titles) to take advantage

of Raiko's weakness and to kill him. This creature is usually depicted in prints as having three eyes and a long tongue (see print on cover of Go World #18). In the most famous treatment of the subject, Kuniyoshi's great triptych published around 1843 (see print on covers of Go World #1 through #4), a whole troop of spooks takes shape as if out of a nightmare. Raiko wakes in the nick of time, however, and cuts off the principal demon's nose, whereupon they all vanish. Again Watanabe and his companions follow a trail of blood deep into a cave where they find a huge spider, Tsuchigumo himself. They manage to kill it, and Raiko quickly recovers.

The classic *No* play *Tsuchigumo*, based on these legends, is divided into two scenes. In the first, the spider visits the ailing Raiko disguised as a sympathetic monk. When it begins to spin its web Raiko realizes its true nature and slashes it with his sword, whereupon it vanishes. In the second scene his retainers follow the trail to the spider's cave and kill it.

This play was adapted as a dance drama for the *kabuki* stage by the great playwright Kawatake Mokuami in 1881, keeping the same name, and this is the version familiar to most theater-goers today. A popular moment in the staging of both the *No* drama and the *kabuki* play occurs when the disguised Tsuchigumo flings out long coils of paper which unravel all over the stage and entrap everyone very dramatically in a tangled web.

Earlier plays which made use of the spider-as-beautiful-woman theme include the dance-drama *Waga Seko no Koi no Ai-Tsuchi*, by Sakurada Jisuke, and a history play, *Yama Mata Yama Oyojume-Banashi* (*Tale of a Night's Lodging in the Mountains*), by Segawa Joku II, staged in Edo in 1818. The covers of Go World #5 and #6 are a print by Toyokuni III depicting a scene from this later play.

The print on the cover of this issue is an oban diptych by Yoshitoshi (1839–1892), published by Kobayashi Tetsujiro in 1886. One of Raiko's retainers has been dozing with his head on the go board. He suspiciously opens his eyes as a seductive woman — actually an apparition created by the Ground-Spider — glides by on her errand of mischief. This is an unusual conception showing Yoshitoshi's fresh approach to traditional themes.

(Print from the Ishi Press Collection)

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Go World is published by The Ishi Press, Inc.
 Address subscriptions to: The Ishi Press, Inc.
 CPO Box 2126, Tokyo, Japan
 Editor: John Power

Yearly subscription rate: ¥5,000 (4 issues)
 Price per single issue: ¥1,250
 Airmail rate: ¥1,800 per issue; ¥7,200 a year
 Prices for back issues 1, 7-61: ¥1,250@

U.S. and Canadian subscribers should order from:

ISHI PRESS INTERNATIONAL
 76 Bonaventura Drive
 San Jose, California 95134-2123

Go World is published quarterly by the Ishi Press, Inc., CPO Box 2126, Tokyo, Japan and is distributed in the U.S. for \$17.00 per year by Ishi Press International, 76 Bonaventura Drive, San Jose, CA 95134-2123. Second-class postage paid at San Jose, California.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Ishi Press International, 76 Bonaventura Drive, San Jose, CA 95134-2123.

Note: Japanese, Chinese, and Korean names are given with the family name first. The Pinyin romanization system is used for mainland Chinese names.

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Go World News



Yet another international tournament gets under way.

International Tournaments

New International Tournament: All Four Far Eastern Countries Do Well

There is yet another tournament on the international scene. The World Baduk Go Championship Tong Yang Securities Cup, an international tournament founded in 1988 by a Korean company, has been expanded into a full-scale international tournament with six competitors from Korea, six from Japan, four from China, two from Chinese Taipei, and one each from Europe and the USA. To bring the total up to 24, the top four place-getters from last year were also seeded, and as they were all Korean, the host country had ten players in the 3rd Cup, the first two rounds of which were held in Seoul on 1 and 3 December.

Previously only a few players from Japan and China had been invited, but this year the world's top players, with the exception of Kobayashi Koichi, were in Seoul to compete for the first prize of 50 million won (about ten million yen or about \$73,000). Unlike most international tournaments to date, success was distributed quite evenly among the Far Eastern countries, which all got players into the quarterfinals. We don't have space to list all

the results in the first two rounds, but some of the more interesting ones are given below.

Round 1. Otake beat Michael Redmond (USA), Kataoka b. Rob van Zeijst (Europe), Ma beat Kobayashi Satoru, Awaji beat Yoo (Korea).

Round 2. Qian beat Takemiya (Qian also beat Takemiya in the final game of the 5th Japan-China Super Go series in 1990), Cho Hun-hyun beat Otake, Nie Weiping beat Yamashiro, Cho Chikun (playing for Korea) beat Ma, Awaji beat Suh Bongseo, Rin Kaiho (playing for Chinese Taipei) beat Tsao Dayuan (China).

Awaji attracted a lot of attention from the Korean press because he beat two of their top four players. The pairings in the quarterfinals, which will be played 14 April 1991, are: Lee Changho (Korea) v. Qian (China), Cho Hun-hyun (Korea) v. Nie Weiping (China), Kataoka v. Cho Chikun, Awaji v. Rin.

The semifinals, scheduled for mid-June, will be best-of-three matches, and the final, to be played in September or October, will be a best-of-five. In this respect, this tournament follows the Ing model rather the Fujitsu one,

but the extra games will increase the burden on the top players, already extremely busy, and may explain why Kobayashi chose not to participate.

Kobayashi Wins Japan-China Meijin Playoff — Again

Kobayashi Koichi is proving to be invincible in the annual playoff between the Japanese and Chinese Meijins. This year the pairing was the same and so was the result: a 2-0 victory for Kobayashi over Ma Xiaochun. Moreover, the wins were decisive ones: Kobayashi believes that his honour as the Japanese Meijin is at stake in these playoffs and he is always determined to crush the opponent. His record in the three Meijin playoffs is 6-0 and his total record to date against Chinese players is now 23-2. Ma prepared for this year's playoff by studying all of Kobayashi's 1990 games, but it didn't help.

Best-of-Five Between Yoda and Lee

The Nihon Ki-in magazine *Igo Club* is sponsoring a best-of-five match between the top

Japanese and Korean players of the younger generation, Yoda Norimoto 8-dan and Lee Changho 4-dan, for a prize of ¥3,000,000 (about \$22,000). Yoda, who turns 25 on 11 February, has won a host of junior titles and is now playing in both the Honinbo and Meijin leagues. Lee Changho is one of the great prodigies of go history. Born on 29 July 1975, he won his first title at the age of 14, defeating his teacher and first Ing world champion, Cho Hun-hyun.

Yoda won the first game, played on 1 February in Seoul. The second game, played on 4 February, was won by Lee.

News from Japan

Kobayashi First Go or Shogi Player to Top 100 Million

1990 was truly the year of Kobayashi Koichi: he defended three titles and challenged for another two. The defences were more successful than the challenges, but even so appearing in five title matches enabled him to become the first go or shogi player to top



Kobayashi: almost invincible against Chinese players



Hane makes a late debut, overthrowing the Kato dynasty in the Oza title.

100 million yen (about \$740,000) in prize money. Kobayashi actually ended the year with earnings of ¥106,040,000, way ahead of the player in second place, who was Rin Kaiho, with ¥56,020,000. In Japan 100 million is the magic figure that proves that you are a success: only a handful of professional baseball players and very few golfers make this much.

In our next issue we plan to present a statistical round-up of the tournament year.

Kobayashi Defends Meijin Title

Kobayashi won the sixth game, played on 7 and 8 November 1990, of the 15th Meijin title match and so completed his second successful defence. A complete report on the title match is given in this issue.

Hane Takes Oza Title from Kato

A go dynasty has come to an end and a 'new' star has taken his first title at the age of 46. After monopolizing the Oza title for the last eight years, Kato has finally let it slip from his grasp and for the first time in 15 years finds himself without a title to his name. Also for the first time, he will be simply 'Kato 9-dan'. Kato missed his chance to match Takagawa's record of nine successive wins in one title.

For Hane, this was revenge for his 1-3 loss to Kato in the same title the previous year. For years the same small group of players have

dominated the title scene. It's ironic that their monopoly should be broken not by a new star in his 20's but by someone from a more mature age group. Forty-six is probably the highest age at which a player has taken his first title. In Hane's case, however, his play is very youthful. He specializes in the high Chinese opening, which he played in three of the five games and which usually leads to sharp fighting. The results:

Game 1 (9 Oct.). Hane (W) won by 1 1/2 points.

Game 2 (25 Oct.). Kato (W) won by resig.

Game 3 (1 Nov.). Kato (B) won by resig.

Game 4 (12 Nov.). Hane (B) by 1/2 point.

Game 5 (19. Nov.). Hane (B) by resig.

Rin Defends Tengen

After taking the Tengen title from Cho last year, Rin has now defended it against an equally dangerous opponent, Kobayashi Koichi. Rin seemed to be in trouble when Kobayashi took the first game, but he came back strongly to sweep the next three and defend the Tengen title for the first time. Following on his win in the Fujitsu world championship, this completed a very successful year for Rin.

The results:

Game 1 (1 Nov.). Kobayashi (B) won by resig.

Game 2 (23 Nov.). Rin (B) won by 1/2 point.

Game 3 (29 Nov.). Rin (W) won by resig.

Game 4 (10 Dec.). Rin (B) won by 3 1/2 points.

We plan to present Game 4, the most interesting of the match, in our next issue.

Kato Kisei Challenger, Kobayashi Leads

Immediately after losing his Oza title, Kato bounced back to become the Kisei challenger, defeating Kobayashi Satoru 2-1 in the playoff. The title-holder has taken the early lead in the title match, however.

The 15th title match got off to a spectacular start in Sao Paulo with an epic struggle that extended all over the board in the first game. Kobayashi seemed to be dictating the pace for most of the game, but he suffered an upset loss in the endgame to a challenger playing with the kind of tenacity we haven't seen from Kato for a while. For the first time in six Kisei title matches, Kobayashi was reduced to his last minute of byo-yomi, which shows how difficult the game was.

Kobayashi quickly recovered to take the second and third games. Kato still doesn't seem to have recovered his old form, so Kobayashi is the favourite, but a win for Kato in the fourth game would change the complexion of the series.

Results to date:

Game 1 (18, 19 Jan.). Kato (B) won by 1 1/2 points.

Game 2 (30, 31 Jan.). Kobayashi (B) won by 1 1/2 points.

Game 3 (6, 7 Feb.). Kobayashi (B) won by resig.

The result of the Kisei playoff was a bitter disappointment for Kobayashi Satoru. He played very well and took the lead in the third game, but seemed to become nervous, for instead of wrapping up his win he started making mistakes that presented the game to Kato — by half a point. The opportunity to become Kisei challenger doesn't come along very often: this is probably a missed opportunity that Kobayashi will rue for the rest of his life.

The results:

Game 1 (15 Nov.). Kobayashi (B) won by resig.

Game 2 (6 Dec.). Kato (B) won by resig.

Game 3 (13 Dec.). Kato (W) won by 1/2 point.

Kobayashi Koichi Leads Honinbo League

Kobayashi has a clean slate in the current Honinbo league, so he has a good chance of getting another crack at Cho's title, but his busy schedule is keeping him a round or two behind the other members of the league. The two players with only one loss are still in the race, but, having already met Kobayashi, Otake has to rely on someone else to slow him down.

Judan Challenger: Yoda or Cho

Yoda Norimoto 8-dan is within sight of his first challenge for an open title. After beating Awaji, Yamashiro and Kamimura Kunio in the winners section of the 29th Judan tournament, Yoda lost to Cho Chikun in the semifinal. After

Continued on page 13.

46th Honinbo League (as of 8 Feb. 1991) Title-holder: Cho Chikun

Rank	Player	KK	O	S	R	A	KS	Y	KH	Score
1	Kobayashi K.	—	1	1		1				3 — 0
2	Otake	0	—	1	1	1		1		4 — 1
3	Sakata	0	0	—	0	0		1		1 — 4
4	Rin Kaiho		0	1	—		0	1	1	3 — 2
5	Awaji	0	0	1		—	0		0	1 — 4
5	Kataoka S.				1	1	—	0	1	3 — 1
5	Yoda		0	0	0		1	—	1	2 — 3
5	Komatsu H.				0	1	0	0	—	1 — 3

Note: The players are ranked according to their results in the previous league.

The 1st International Go Amateur Pair Tournament: NKB Cup



A new kind of international tournament

On 13 December 1990 the world's first pair tournament for man-woman teams made its debut. With the support and cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the Nihon Ki-in, the Kansai Ki-in, the Asahi Newspaper, and under the sponsorship of NKB Inc. and the Japan Tourist Bureau, the 1st International Go Amateur Pair Tournament was held in the Fuyo Hall at the Kokusai Kanko Hotel in Tokyo. Sixty-four players in 32 teams competed in the main tournament. They were made up of teams that had qualified in the preliminary tournament held on the previous day and seeded teams from China, Taiwan, Korea and Japan. Another 32 teams competed in the handicap tournament held at the same time, so altogether 128 men and women in 64 teams participated in this innovative tournament. After some fierce competition, the team of Komori Shoji and Midorigawa Sachiko emerged as the winner and secured the honour of becoming the 1st Amateur Pair Champions.

The idea of the Pair Tournament is that two teams, each made up of a male and a female player, are matched against each other in a game of go. The players on each team play al-



Ishida Yoshio, the Chief Referee, congratulates the winning team of Minatogawa and Komori.

ternate moves for their side; they are forbidden to consult with each other during the game and they cannot leave the board at the same time. Worthy of note was the 'clean' atmosphere of this tournament: the men wore coats and ties, and there was a special rule that the tournament venue was no-smoking, making a contrast to previous tournaments. Rivalry was intense, but the wide range of combinations — young men and women, parents and children, married couples, junior high school and elementary school pupils — created a friendly and lively atmosphere throughout the tournament.



*Chairman of the Tournament
Committee, Iwama Eitaro.*

The interest of the Pair Tournament

The genesis of the Pair Tournament lies in the desire of two women players, Taki Hiroko and Sato Akiko, to find a way to increase the number of women go fans and to demonstrate the interest of go to young people. Above all, they wanted to make go more fun for go players around the world. The response to their appeal of lovers of go in every field in Japan, together with the encouragement of Japanese professional players, led to the birth of this tournament. When two people play a game as a team, you find that a different strategy is necessary from a game between individuals. Not only do you have to analyse the opponent's moves, you also have to read the meaning of your partner's moves. During the course of a game, you inevitably find yourself taken by surprise or perplexed or moved to admiration by moves played by your partner. The necessity for working out how to make



*1st, 2nd and 3rd place-getters in
the Handicap Tournament, A Class*

most effective use of your partner's moves gives pair games an interest and excitement that you don't find in individual games. In that sense, the pair tournament shows us a new facet of the fascination of go and provides a new way of approaching the game.

All kinds of combinations are possible in forming teams: parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, boyfriend and girlfriend. By playing together, livelier communication between people is promoted, go becomes a family game, and we can expect this mental sport to become even more popular.

The 2nd Pair Tournament is scheduled for 1 December 1991. Because of the short notice, the 1st Tournament started with just the four Far Eastern countries participating, but we hope that teams from many different countries will compete in the 2nd Tournament.



*1st, 2nd and 3rd place-getters in
the Handicap Tournament, B Class*



Playing order:
 Minatogawa: Moves 1, 5, 9 ...
 Nakamura: 2, 6, 10 ...
 Komori: 3, 7, 11 ...
 Sogabe: 4, 8, 12 ...

Black wins by 1 1/2 points.

Meeting in the final: Sogabe Toshiyuki and Nakamura Chikako in one team versus Komori Shoji and Minatogawa Sachiko in the other. All are well-known amateur players in Japan.

We look forward to the cooperation of go fans all round the world in nurturing this newborn tournament.

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 3-4-1, Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku
 Tokyo, Japan.
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While this game was played, in a separate room, Ishida Yoshio 9-dan, the Chief Referee, gave a public commentary using a large board in the tournament hall.

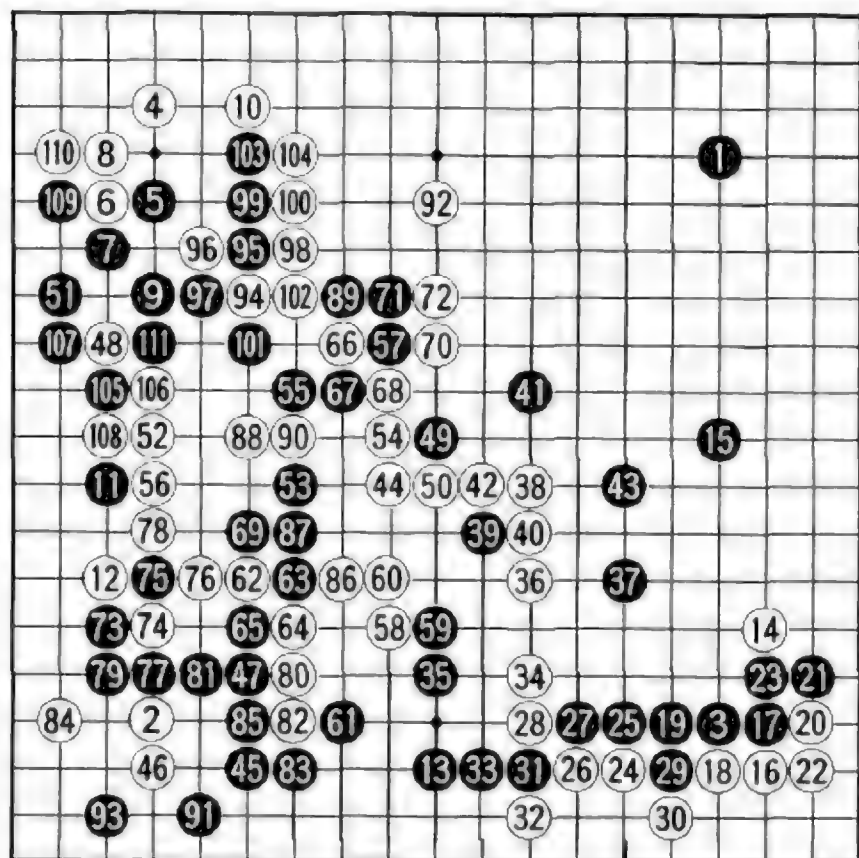


Figure 1 (1-111)

Final

White: Sogabe Toshiyuki, Nakamura Chikako

Black: Komori Shoji, Minatogawa Sachiko

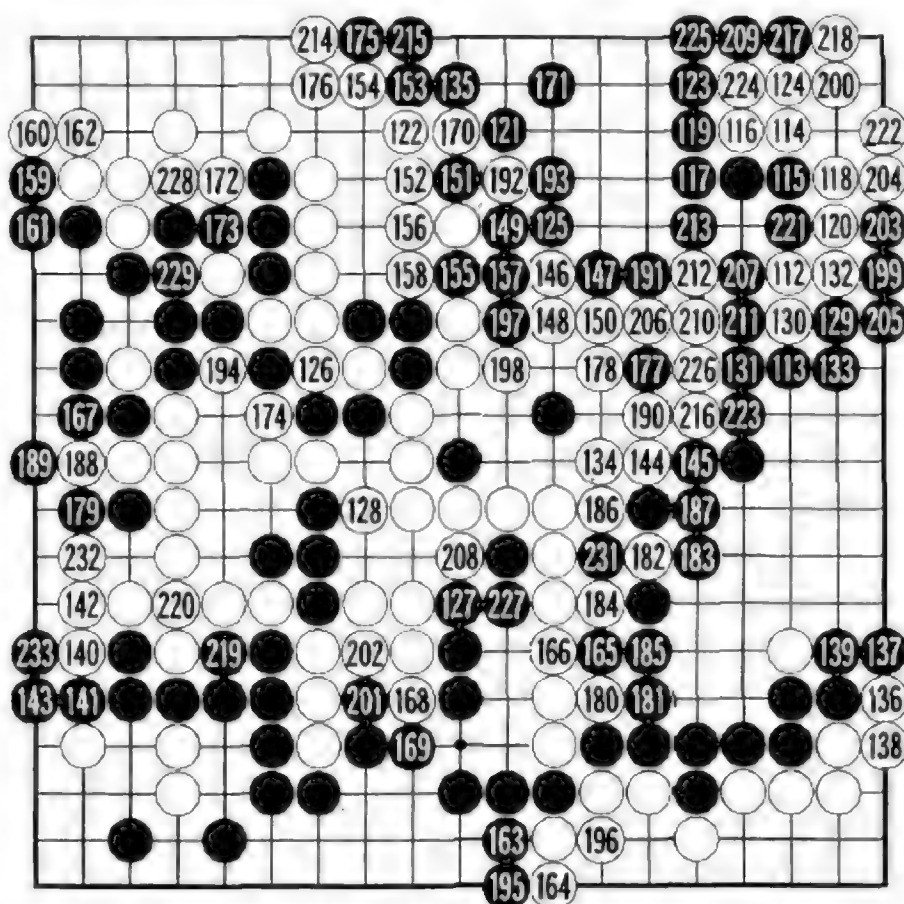


Figure 2 (112-234)
 230: at 151; 234: at 231.

White wins and connects the ko.

Figure 1 (1-111)

White 28. Wanting to play here is natural, but this starts some sharp fighting, and the game is a little easier for Black.

Black 41 is a typical woman player's move (played by Minatogawa). Black 43 next would usually be at 45, but 43 takes good care of Black's position and avoids advancing too far.

Black 53 is an ingenious move: it makes miai of capping at 67 and pushing up at 56.

Black 73. Better to extend to 158 (see Figure 2).

Black 81. Black should connect at 85.

Black's plays shows signs of inconsistency, rescuing a stone with 87, then sacrificing the group with 89.

When the centre fight comes to a pause, Black may seem to have done well in various places, but the actual result is that Black has lost a lot of points.

Black 93. Black should capture at 141, which would make a big difference to the endgame.

White sets out to attack the black group with 94, but the follow-up at 96 is a bit of a compromise. If White wants to make a thoroughgoing attack, he should play at 101, making it difficult for Black to get eye shape.

In the end, White's teamwork in the attack worked out badly, and Black lived with a nice shape. This gives Black the edge.

As so often happens in pair games, the lead

switched back and forth a number of times, making this a very interesting game for the spectators.

Figure 2 (112-234)

White plays 112 in the hope of creating complications.

Black 119. There's nothing wrong with the usual move of Black 120 (which is what the player who played 113 probably wanted).

White 124. Playing 129 first is correct timing. This was the decisive point of the game: once Black plays 129, taking a small lead, White no longer has any chance of winning.

Ishida: 'Teamwork in a pair tournament is very difficult, so playing by yourself may be less of a strain, but conversely there's also an enjoyment that you don't get by yourself.' As this comment indicates, this 'enjoyment that you don't get by yourself' is the essence of the Pair Tournament.



From the tournament poster

Consultants, professional players who recommend the Pair system



Iwamoto Kaoru



Hashimoto Utaro



Masubuchi Tatsuko



Fujisawa Shuko



Otake Hideo



Rin Kaiho



Kato Masao



Takemiya Masaki



Kobayashi Koichi



Cho Chikun



Ishikura Noboru



Sugiuchi Kazuko



Honda Sachiko



Oyama Toshiko

Professional Instructors at the Pair Tournament



Honda Kunihisa



Kobayashi Satoru



Imamura Toshiya



Komatsu Hideki



Michael Redmond



Tei Meiki



Ogawa Tomoko



Omori Yasushi



Ito Yoshio

16th Meijin League (as of 8 Feb. 1991) Title-holder: Kobayashi Koichi

Rank	Player	O	T	C	A	R	Y	F	I	M	Score
1	Otake	—	0								0 — 1
2	Takemiya	1	—			0					1 — 1
3	Cho Chikun			—			0			1	1 — 1
4	Awaji				—		0		0		0 — 2
5	Rin Kaiho		1			—					1 — 0
6	Yoda			1	1		—				2 — 0
7	Fujisawa S.							—	0	1	1 — 1
7	Ishii Kunio				1			1	—		2 — 0
7	Mimura			0				0		—	0 — 2

Note: The players are ranked according to their results in the previous league.

switching over to the parallel losers tournament, he defeated Kobayashi Koichi and Rin Kaiho, in the semifinal and final respectively, so he earned the right to a rematch with Cho in the playoff between the losers and winners sections. The winner will challenge Takemiya Judan.

New Star Wins Women's Honinbo

Nineteen-year-old Nakazawa Ayako 1-dan became the first teenager and the first 1-dan to take a women's title when she defeated Kusunoki Teruko 7-dan 2-1 in the title match. With the 22-year-old Aoki Kikuyo 3-dan holding the Women's Meijin title and the 20-year-

old Sakakibara Fumiko 3-dan (Kansai Ki-in) holding the Women's Kakusei Cup, this completes the rejuvenation of the Japanese women's titles. In both the Women's Honinbo games she won, Nakazawa fought back strongly from an unfavourable start. The title was decided on 10 December.

Yoda and Ishii Lead 16th Meijin League

It's too early in the piece for the heading above to mean much, but it's nice to see some different faces in the news. Yoda owes his share of the lead to beating Cho Chikun by half a point in their second round game.

Continued on page 72.

WORKSHOPS IN THE PRACTICAL CREATIVE AND HEALING ARTS

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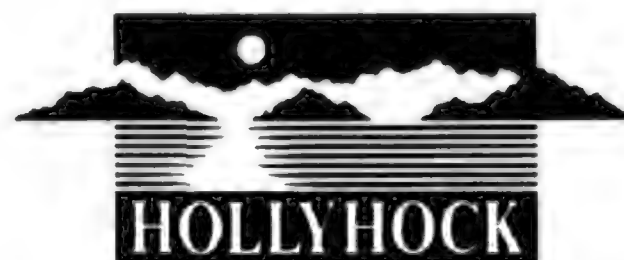
James Kerwin

A five-day workshop, July 8-13, at Hollyhock with James Kerwin, a professional shodan since 1978. Kerwin, a disciple of Iwamoto Kaoru, 9-dan, became the first

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Kobayashi Satoru Wins 3rd IBM Lightning Go Championship

Kobayashi Satoru still looks very young, but already he is 31. When he was a teenager — he became professional shodan at the age of 15 — he was considered the most promising of the four Kobayashi children, but until this year his only significant achievements were winning a place in one Meijin league (the 9th, in 1983) and defeating five Chinese players in a row in the 2nd Japan–China Super Go. It was high time for him to make his move if he wanted to join the select group of top-flight professionals.

We don't know if Kobayashi feels any sense of urgency about his career, but at any rate he seemed to be trying a lot harder in 1990. He won the right to challenge Kobayashi Koichi (no relation) for the Gosei title, then instead of being cast down by his straight defeat at the hands of Japan's number one he bounced back to take his first title, the 3rd IBM Lightning Go Open Championship. He ended the year by winning his way to the playoff to decide the Kisei challenger.

With his IBM win, Kobayashi more or less drew level with the other three members of

the post-Cho quartet (they are Yamashiro, who has twice challenged for the Honinbo title, O Rissei, who won the 1989 Kakusei Cup, and Kataoka, who has won two Tengen titles). In this issue, we take a look at the IBM final. Here Kobayashi's opponent was Ohira Shuzo, who defeated Ishida Yoshio, winner of the 1st IBM Cup, in one semifinal while Kobayashi beat O Rissei in the other.

Final: Kobayashi Satoru v. Ohira

White: Ohira Shuzo 9-dan

Black: Kobayashi Satoru 9-dan

Komi: 5 1/2; time: 30 minutes each, plus 30 seconds byo-yomi per move.

Played on 8 September 1990.

Figure 1 (1–48). *White gets off to a poor start.*

Kobayashi was happy to get black in the final — for the fifth time in six games in the Main Tournament — because he believes that Black has an advantage in fast games.

White 10. Kobayashi: 'If at A, I planned to play B.' The high move of 10 makes a white



Kobayashi Satoru (left) savours the moment of victory.

pincer on the centre left side more of a threat, so Black makes the narrow extension to 11 (actually the usual joseki).

With 14 on White develops rapidly, so the natural corollary is that Black builds thickness. If the players had played White A and Black B, Black would probably have been the one to develop quickly. Playing high or low with one move completely transforms the whole game.

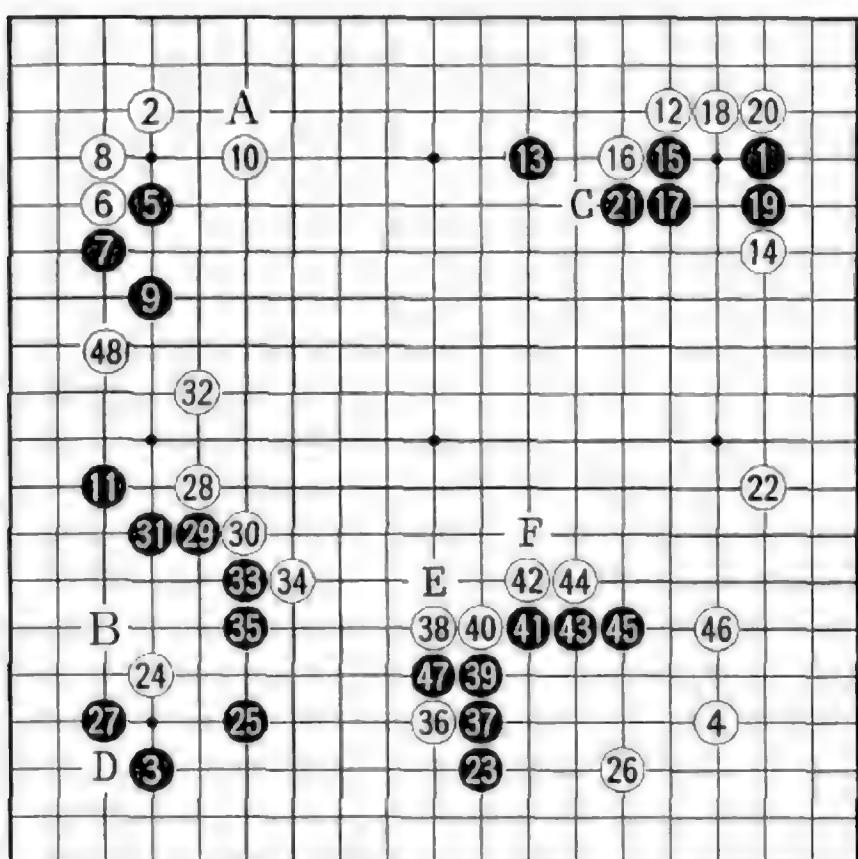
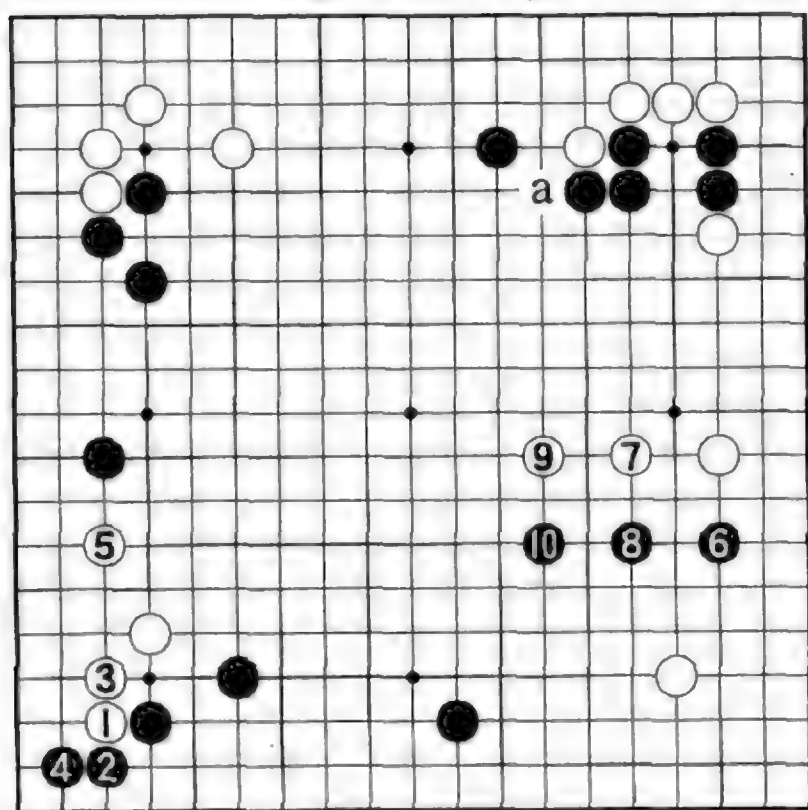


Figure 1 (1-48)



Dia. 1

Note that after the joseki to 20 White will be aiming at the hane at C if and when play in the bottom left makes the ladder favourable for him.

White 26. KS: 'When White plays 24, he usually answers Black 25 by settling himself as in Dia. 1. My plan was to invade at 6. If Black splits White into two with 6 to 10, he can cope with the challenge of White 'a'.'

IBM Prize Money (Main Tournament)

1st place: ¥4,000,000 (about \$30,000)

2nd: ¥1,300,000

3rd: ¥600,000

5th x 4: ¥300,000

4th: ¥400,000

9th x 8: ¥220,000

losers in 2nd round: ¥140,000

losers in 1st round: ¥70,000

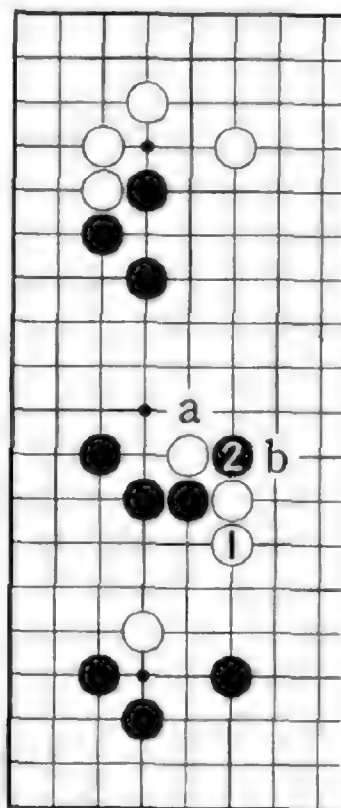
In the 1st Championship the first prize was ¥3,000,000; it was raised to ¥4,000,000 for the second and third cups.

White's reason for avoiding Dia. 1 is that Black takes the initiative there, but —

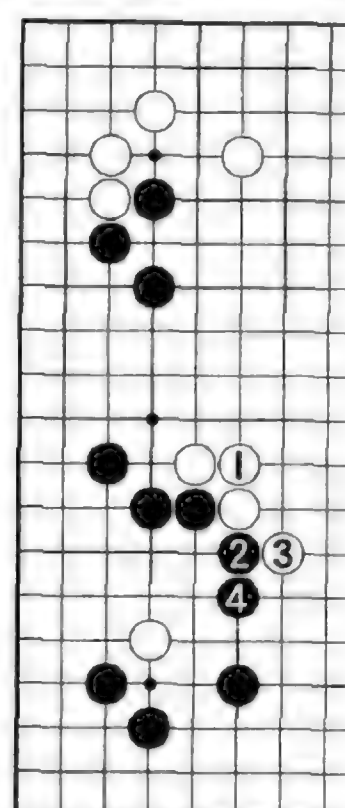
KS: 'After 27 one has to question whether 24 was a good move. If one hypothesizes simply exchanging White 26 for Black 25, then the exchange of 24 for 27 is bad, in that it erases the aji of White D.'

White 28. Apparently White 29 would be better: Black 29 and 31 make White 24 look bad.

White 32 is an attempt to get out of the dilemma with which White is faced. If White plays the usual move of 1 in Dia. 2, Black will cut at 2; White can't hope for success in the fight following White 'a', Black 'b'. Connecting at 2 in Dia. 3 is not appealing either: Black solidifies his corner with 2 and 4 and White has nothing to look forward to. For those reasons Ohira chooses 32, aiming at 48 later.



Dia. 2



Dia. 3

KS: 'I played 33 and 35 regardless, securing the corner. I believed that this was an easy fuseki for me.'

White 40 also shows what a hard time White is having finding a reasonable strategy.

If he connected at White 47, then Black 40, White E, Black F would follow. The cutting points around 28 and 30 would then be too big a burden on White.

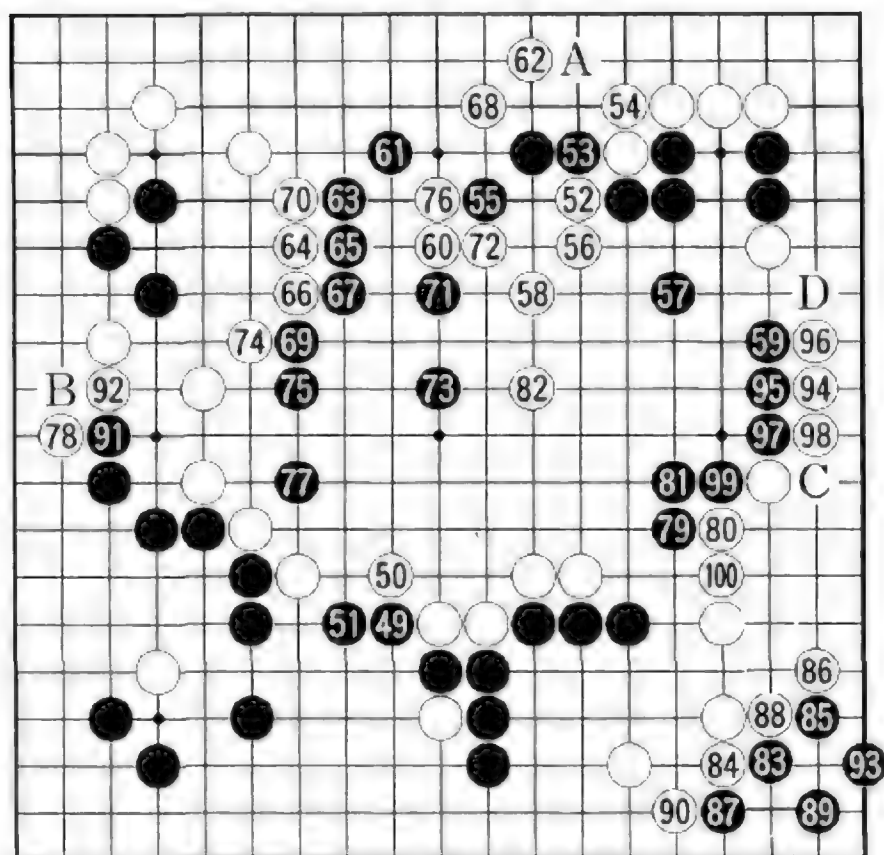
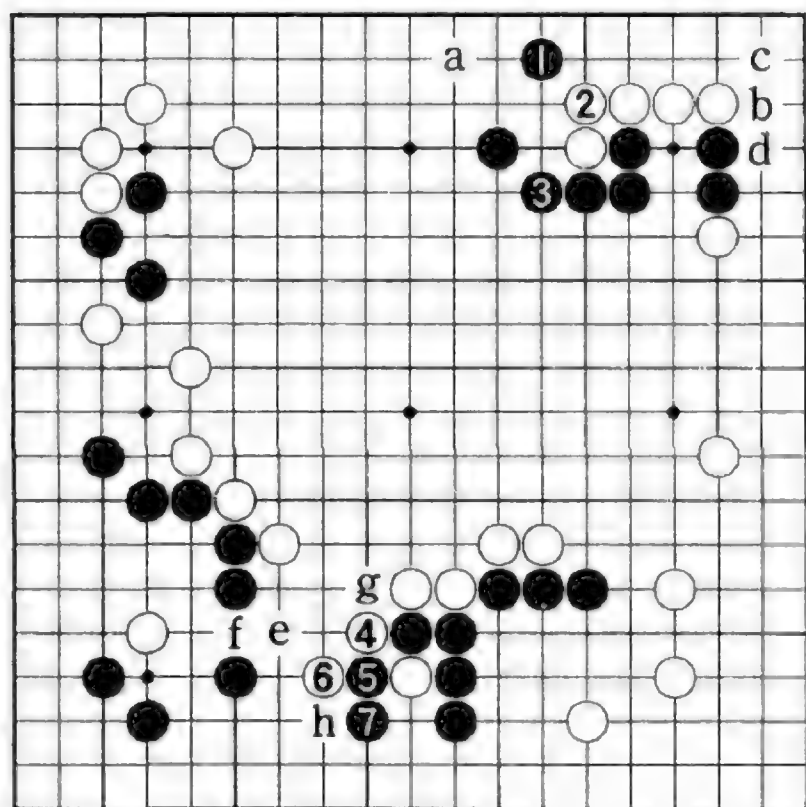


Figure 2 (49-100)



Dia. 4

Figure 2 (49-100). Letting White get back into the game.

Black 49. KS: 'Black went overboard for profit. I knew that White 52 was coming and I didn't underestimate its effectiveness, but I thought that taking a clear lead in territory would make the game easy to win. Having a lead subtly affected my strategy.'

Black should build thickness with 1 and 3 in Dia. 4. In this shape Black 'a' will be sente against the corner; if White tenukis, he can't get eyes after Black 'b', White 'c', Black 'd'. Even if White plays 4 at the bottom, Black can

afford to give way up to 7. Exchanging White 'e' for Black 'f' just makes Black 'g' more severe [as White becomes heavier], so White can't easily plunge in at 'h'.

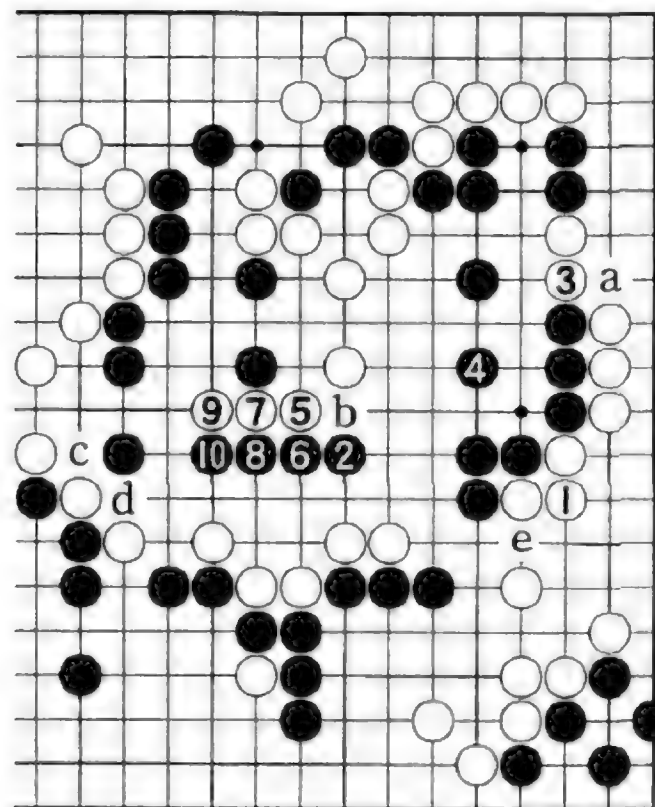
KS: 'Black 55 also shows bad fighting spirit. Usually I'd play A without thinking twice. It felt funny to see White slide along the side at 62.'

As his play here showed, Kobayashi's early lead had led him to slacken off. With 68 to 76, White took some solid profit.

Black 77. KS: 'This is an absurdly slack move. White 78 is enormous. The game is now even; Black might even be a shade behind.' Instead of 77, Black should have played at B, forcing White to defend in the centre. While he does so, Black would be able to settle his own centre group.

White 100 is a difficult point. KS: 'I wonder about this move. Because of the cutting point at C, blocking at D is very big for Black. I would have found White 1 in Dia. 5 more disagreeable. That way Black wouldn't want to block at 'a', yet I would have no confidence in being able to swallow up the centre group with Black 'b'. Black 2 is probably the right move. The sequence to 10 takes a fair bit of profit, but White might exchange 'c' for Black 'd', then play 9 at 10, after which no one can predict what will happen. Blocking at D in the figure makes the game easy to count for Black.'

Kobayashi was confident of a small lead after White 100. For his part, Ohira apparently expected Black to try to capture the centre group as in Dia. 5. In that case, it's clearly better for White to have 1 in Dia. 5 at 'e'.



Dia. 5

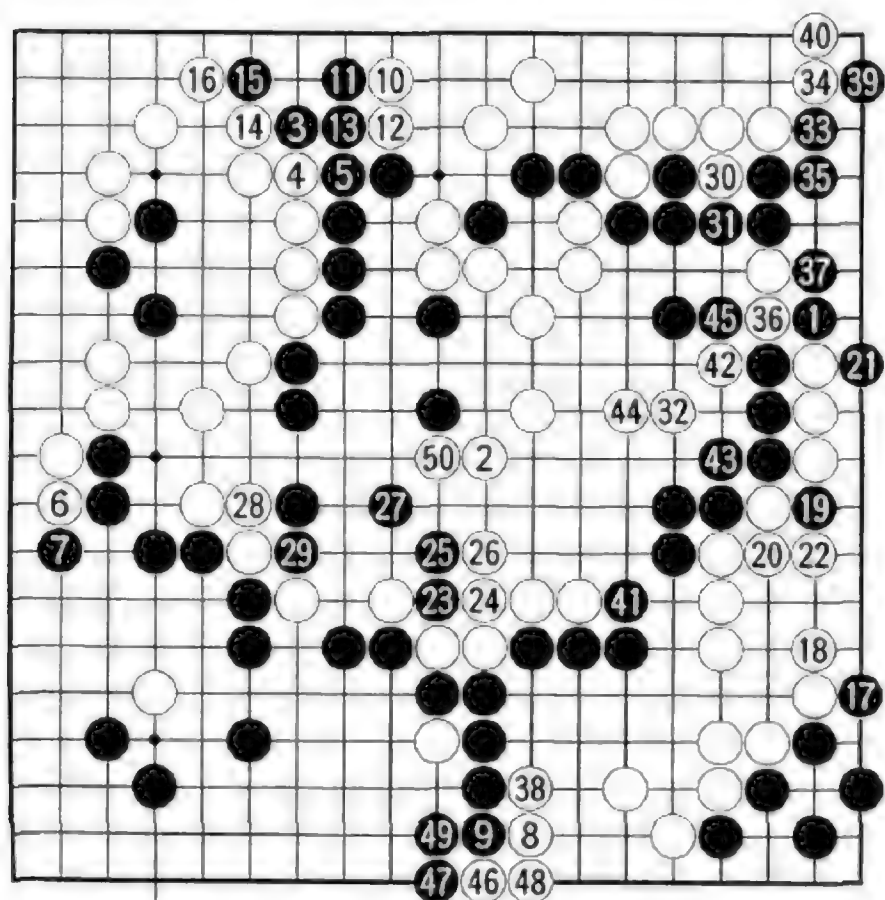
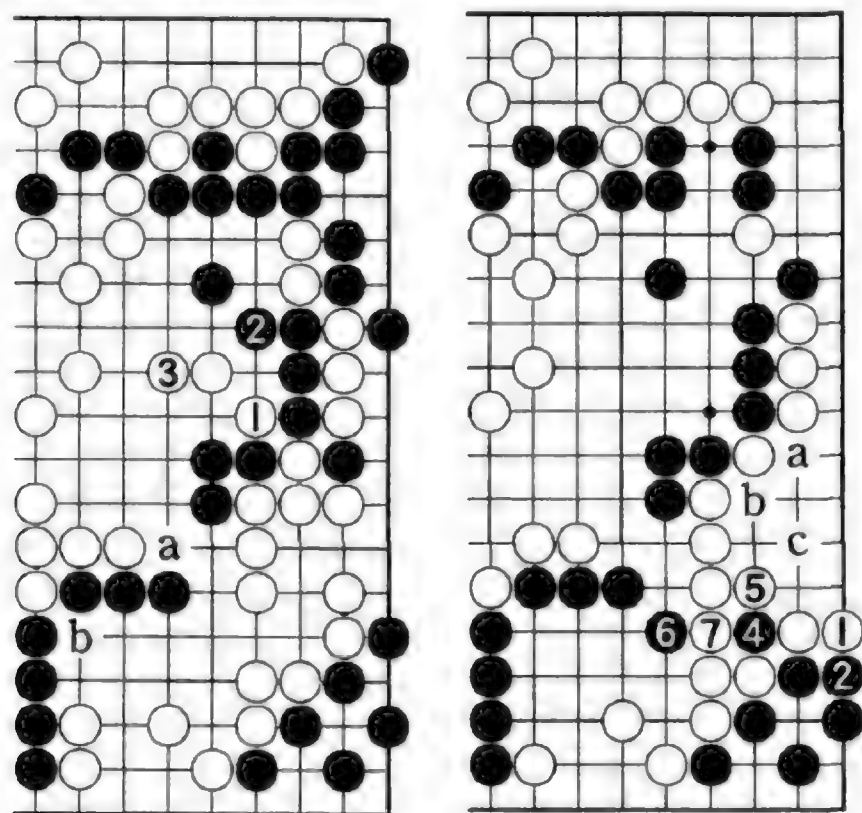


Figure 3 (101-150)

Figure 3 (101-150). *Flirting with danger*

The game seemed to be proceeding smoothly for Kobayashi, but there was a moment when his head could have been sent flying. The hane of 39 is careless. If White played 1 and 3 in *Dia. 6*, 'a' and 'b' would be miai next, meaning instant defeat for Black.

White 40 lets Black off the hook. The game is over after 41.



Dia. 6

Dia. 7
3: elsewhereFigure 4 (151-213). *Favoured by Lady Luck*

The final margin was only 1 1/2 points. Some readers may wonder why White didn't force with 1 in *Dia. 7*, as that increases his territory by two points. KS: 'You can't say that White profits from playing 1 in *Dia. 7*, as Black

can cut at 4, giving him the peep at 6. If White answers 4 at 7, Black can play 'a', White 'b', Black 'c'.

In this game luck was on Kobayashi's side.

Black wins by 1 1/2 points.

(Kido, November 1990)

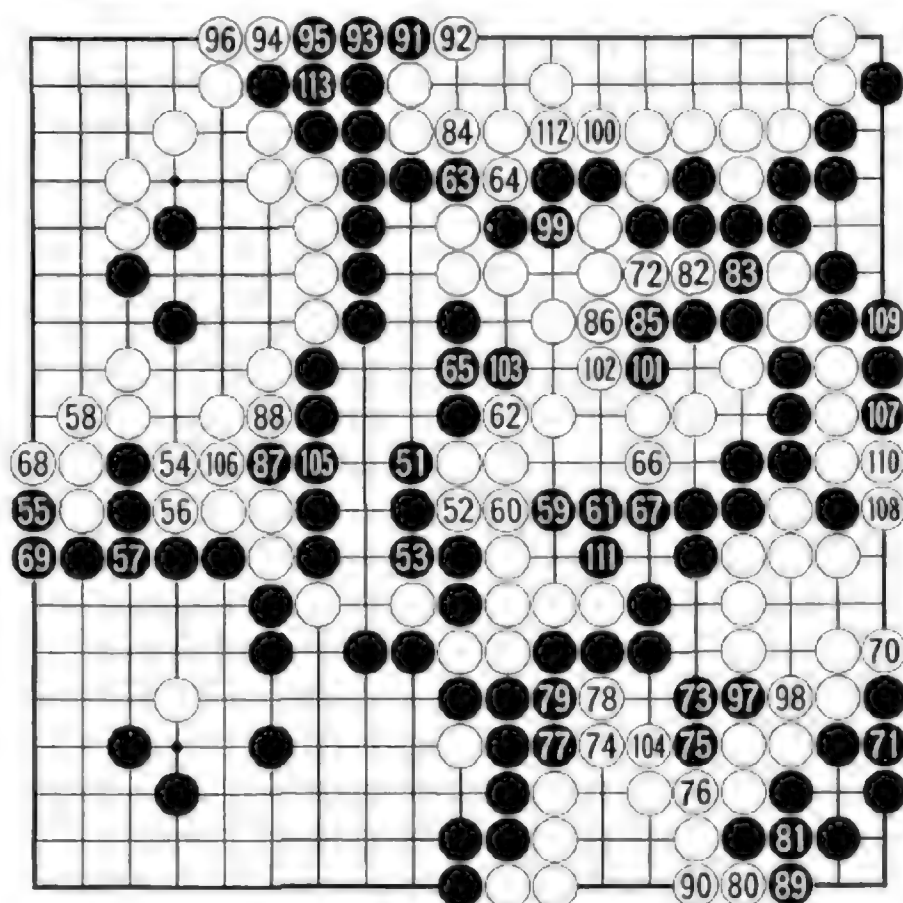


Figure 4 (151-213)



At a press interview later Kobayashi showed his happiness with his success, but he did let drop one interesting comment: 'That strong player was not in the tournament.' He was referring to the better-known Kobayashi, Koichi, who has not yet bothered with the IBM Championship (either because he needs the rest or because a four million yen prize is not enough to tempt someone in his income bracket). Satoru's wipeout in the Gosei title match still smarted. Unfortunately, he missed a chance to seek revenge in the Kisei title.

The 3rd Fujitsu Cup

In our previous issue we presented Rin's impressive win over Nie Weiping in the final of the 3rd Fujitsu Cup and two games from the quarterfinals. There were a lot of other interesting games in the 1990 Cup, and we hope to present as many of them as we can before we have to move on to the next Cup. In this issue, we have a brilliant loss by Yamashiro and one of Kobayashi Koichi's most devastating wins in recent memory.

Yamashiro v. Cho Hun-hyun (Quarterfinal)

In 1989 Yamashiro's role in the Fujitsu Cup was confined to helping Jimmy Cha make a name for himself. The next year he went a long way to redeeming himself with good wins over Tsao Dayuan of China and Suh Bongsoo of Korea. However, his best play was perhaps to be found in this effort against the Ing World Champion, Cho Hun-hyun of Korea, or at least in the first half of the game. It was his first clash with Cho, and, according to Yamashiro, he put the importance of the game out of his mind and just concentrated on playing interesting go.

White: Yamashiro Hiroshi 9-dan (Japan)

Black: Cho Hun-hyun 9-dan (Korea)

Komi: 5 1/2; time: 3 hours each.

Played in Seoul on 2 June 1990.

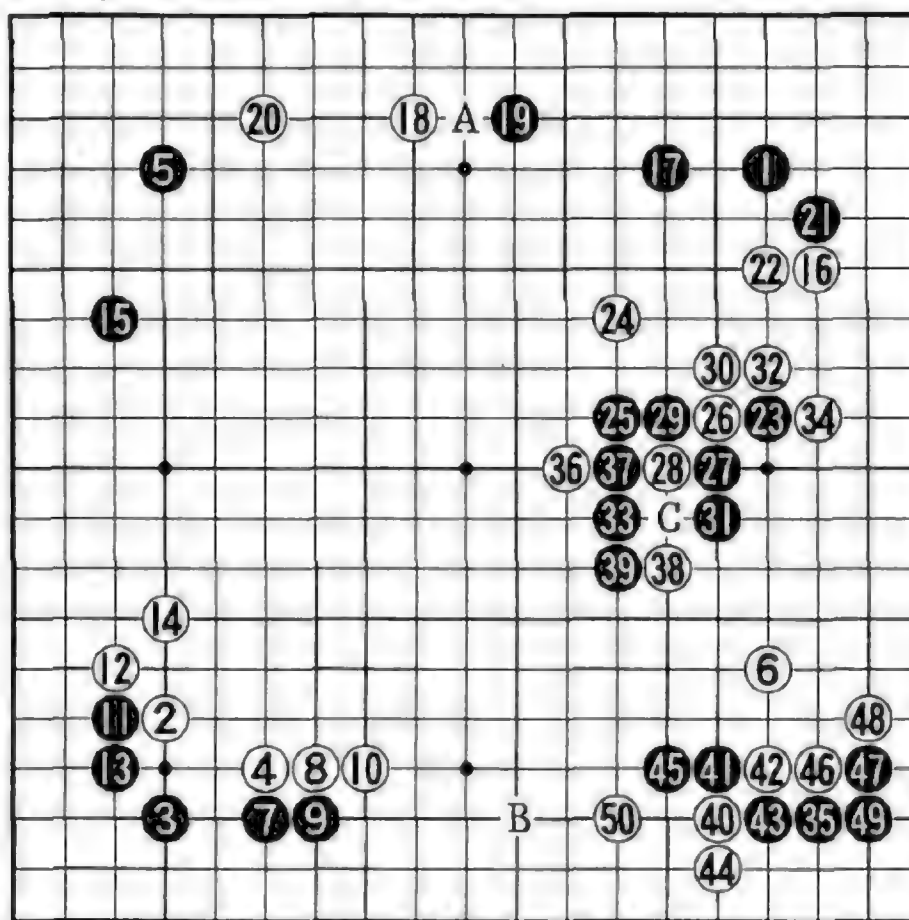


Figure 1 (1-50)

Figure 1 (1-50). *Using thickness to attack*

Yamashiro: 'I've been playing the takamoku (5-4 point) a lot recently. When Black burrowed under it immediately with 3, I just felt



The game starts: Yamashiro (left) v. Cho Hun-hyun.

like playing 6. This is the first time I've played the 6-4 point. Since my opponent likes territory anyway, I decided to let him do what he likes in this game.'

White 16. White usually splits the top with A. Playing 16 first is an attempt to develop more rapidly. When Black pincers at 23, White's plan is to use his thickness below to start a fight. He puts his plan into effect immediately with 26. Perhaps Black should have made just a one-space jump with 25.

White 32 is essential, as his shape would crumble if Black pushed up at 32. White 34 is another thick move: White wants to drive Black towards his thickness on the bottom left.

Black 35 surprised Yamashiro: he expected Black 40, followed by White 35, Black B.

White 38. Expecting Black to answer both peeps docilely is a little unrealistic. Yamashiro commented that he should have omitted 36 in favour of playing 38 immediately, in which case Black would have answered at C. The presence of a black stone at 39 has a significant effect on the game.

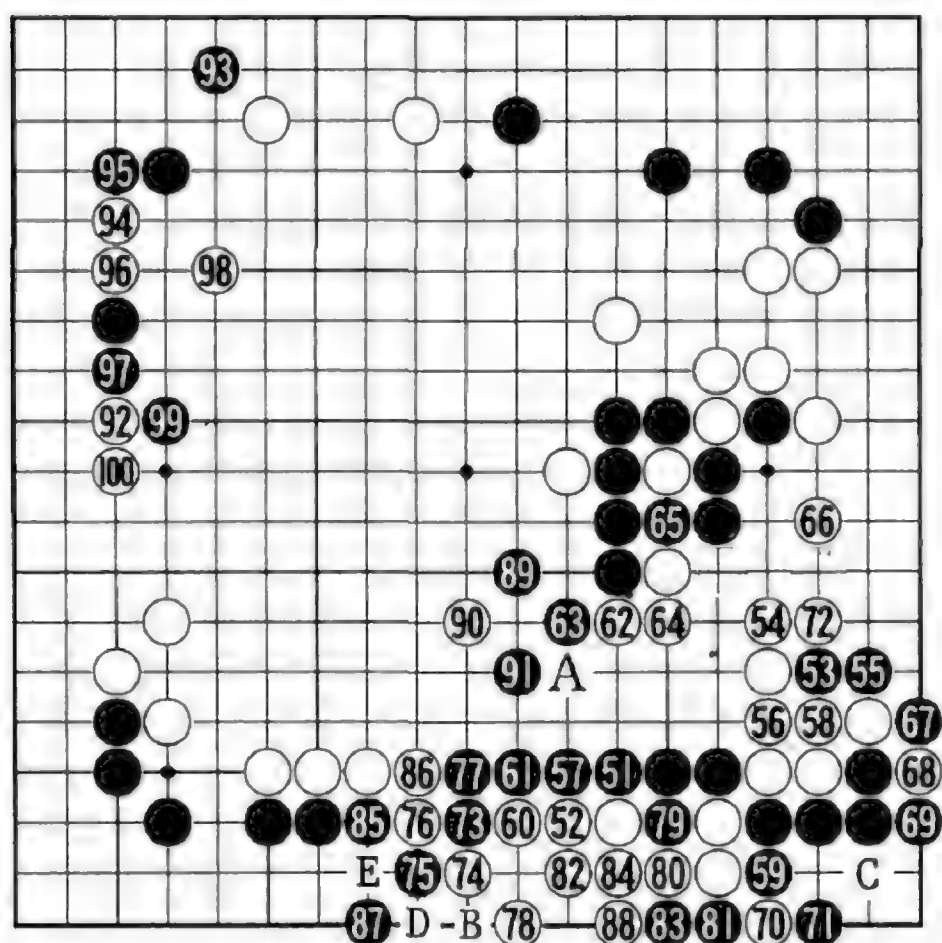


Figure 2 (51-100)

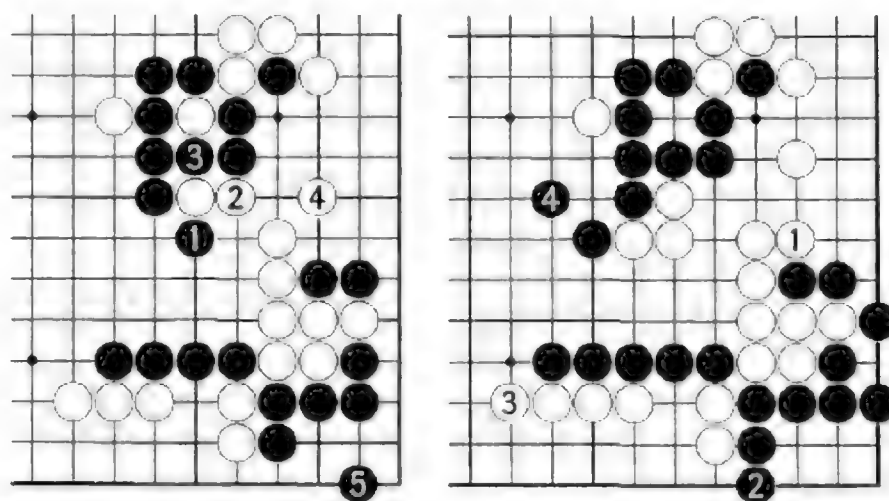
Figure 2 (51-100). A group at White's mercy

Black 61 is bad: Black must hane at 1 in *Dia. 1*. After White links up with 4, he could then live in the corner with 5. Yamashiro: 'This way the position would probably have been good for Black.'

Black is in trouble after White 62 to 66. Next, a hane at A, capturing the five black

stones below, and killing the corner group are miai for White.

White 70 is an important move. If White plays 72 immediately, Black has a good answer at 2 in *Dia. 2*. This move not only secures life for the corner group, it also menaces the white group to the left. Defending at 3 becomes necessary, so Black gets time to save the outside stones as well with 4.



Dia. 1

Dia. 2

Black 73 is a desperation measure. Up to 89, Cho rescues the outside stones while creating the threat of a ko at B.

Up to this point Yamashiro's play has been superb, but he falters with 92. Yamashiro: 'Taking the corner with C would have been simpler. The game would have been over.' Capturing the corner would be worth 35 points. If Black started the ko fight with B, White would play D, then ignore his ko threat to capture at E. That means that Black would not be able to start the ko immediately.

'I don't like crudely killing groups,' commented Yamashiro. For the onlooker, however, the continuation in the game is very puzzling: the game actually ends with no one bothering about the 35 points in the corner.

It's understandable why Cho doesn't add a stone at C: he can't afford the time to invest a move here. His only chance is to get a fight started somewhere else.



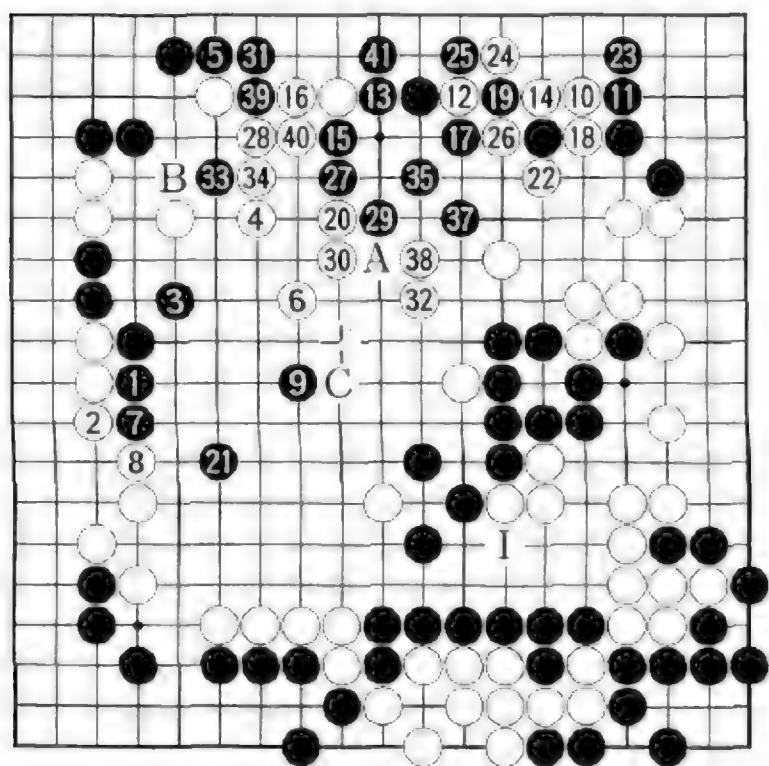
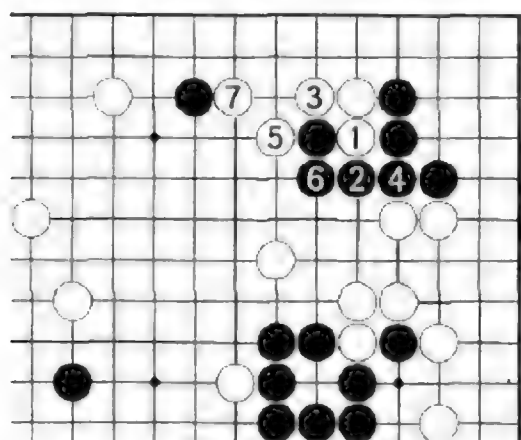


Figure 3 (101-141)
36: ko



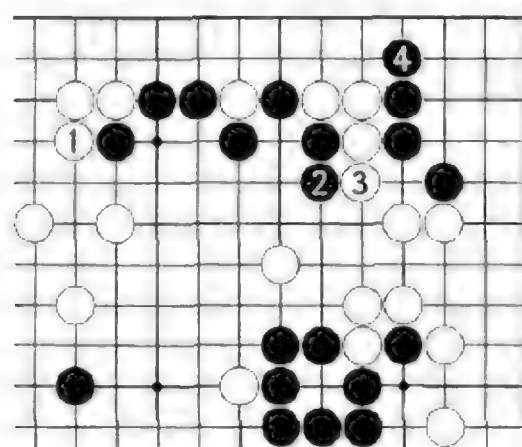
Dia. 3: good for White

Figure 3 (101-141). Yamashiro lets Cho create complications.

White 10. Yamashiro: 'This is a move I'd been eager to make for some time.' It's the vital point for exploiting Black's thinness, but attaching at 12 next is unnecessary. White should push down at 18 immediately. Black 2 to White 7 in Dia. 3 would follow. Even if Black switched next to the bottom right corner, the game would be even on the board.

When Black plays 19, then rams into White with 27, it is White on the contrary who finds that his position has become thin. The game is now a confused fight, so Cho's strategy of forgetting about his corner group has succeeded.

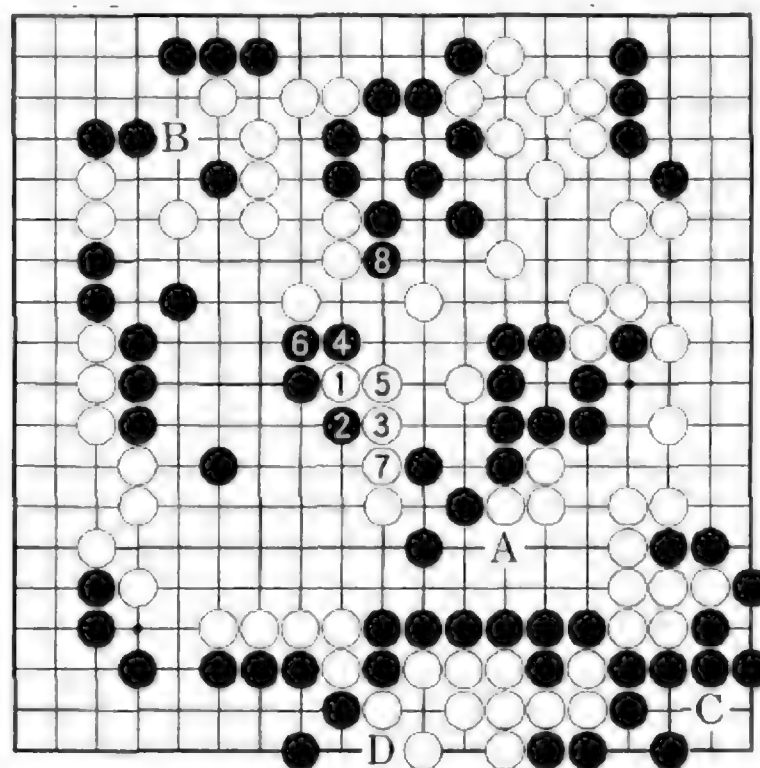
Yamashiro: 'I should have played 22 at 1 in Dia. 4. If I had made my group thick like this, I could have gone back and killed the corner group any time I felt like it.' When White has to worry about the security of his top left group, the problem of the corner diminishes in importance.



Dia. 4: better for White

White 32. White A would be thicker.

White 38 is the losing move. Before making his second eye with 41, Cho plays 39, a natural but still effectively timed forcing move. It deprives White of the option of making a second eye with B. Yamashiro: 'Before playing 38 I should first have attached at C, splitting Black into two. Black 2 to White 7 in Dia. 5 would follow. If next Black 8, an exchange follows, with White capturing the centre group with A and Black capturing the white group with B. This way the game remains a confused fight and it would probably be decided by the ko after White C and Black D.'



Dia. 5: an even game

Figure 4 (142-185). Helping the opponent to his feet

White 48. If White plays at 49, Black captures the top group after A.

Black 49 is very severe. After Black 59, B and 61 are miai, so one of the white groups has to die.

Cho's style is to develop rapidly, so inevitably he leaves thin groups behind, but he is usually able to fight his way out of trouble

with his superb reading ability. In this game he got into what looked like a hopeless position, but he was able to seize a win by throwing the game into confusion.

Yamashiro: 'My opponent was telling me to do what I liked to him, yet instead of finishing him off I helped him to his feet.'

The game ends with neither side bothering about the 35 points in the bottom right corner. It can't be very often that the fate of such a big group is irrelevant to the outcome. 'Why didn't I capture the corner when it mattered?' Yamashiro lamented.

White resigns after Black 185.

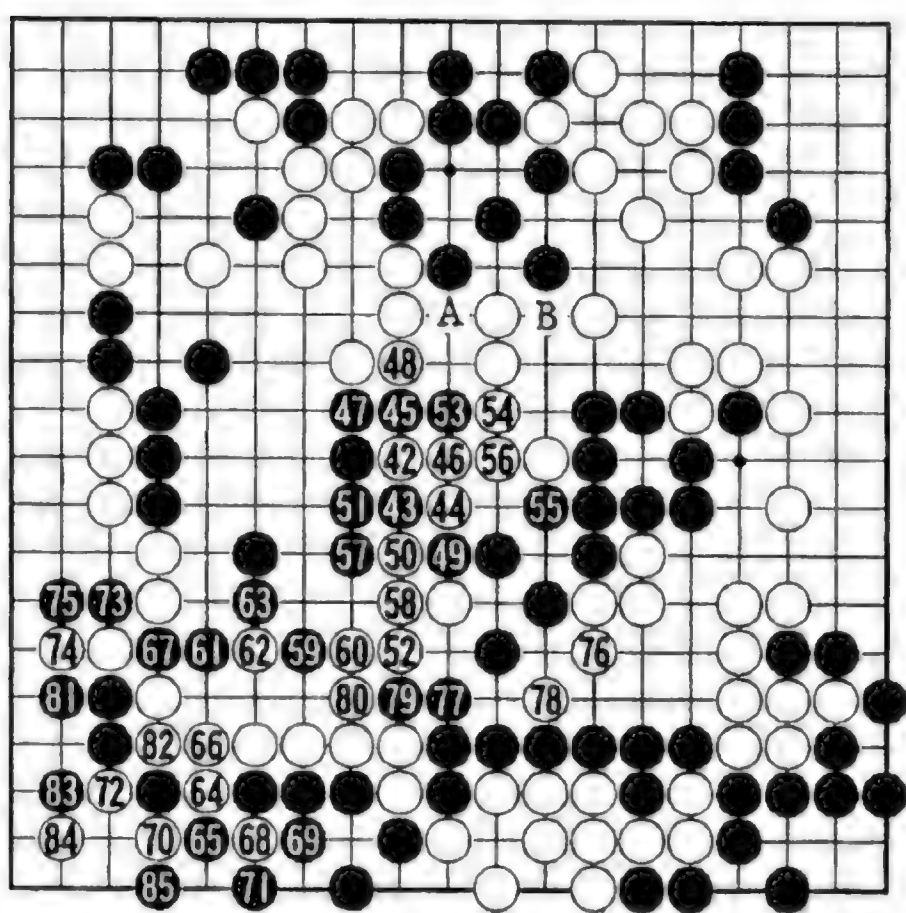


Figure 4 (142–185)

Playoff for 3rd Place

White: Cho Hun-hyun 9-dan

Black: Kobayashi Koichi 9-dan

Played in Tokyo on 4 August 1990.

This game is one of Kobayashi's most spectacular wins of recent years. In a deceptive game, which seemed to be going well for Cho, one brilliant move revealed the real state of affairs.

As Japan's number one, Kobayashi must feel a little chagrined by his lack of success in the international tournaments. Making it to the semifinal of the Fujitsu Cup was his best effort in the four major international tournaments so far (three Fujitsu Cups and one Ing Cup). You would expect to see the Japanese

and Korean number ones face off in the final, but they seem strangely fated to run into each other early on in these tournaments. The worst case was the 1st Fujitsu Cup, when they were drawn to meet in the first round (see GW51). Cho's loss then earned him a very frosty reception from Korean fans back home, but Kobayashi didn't profit much from his win, losing to Takemiya in the quarterfinal (GW53). Later in the same year, 1988, Cho took revenge by defeating Kobayashi in the second round of the Ing Cup (GW54), then in 1989 he beat him again in the second round of the 2nd Fujitsu Cup (actually Kobayashi's first game, as he was seeded into the second round). That gave Kobayashi a 1–2 record against Cho, but actually he had also lost three games to Cho between 1967 and 1971, when Cho was a member of the Nihon Ki-in, so overall his record was 1–5, worse than his record against any other player. For these reasons, the following win must have been some consolation to Kobayashi for not playing in the final.

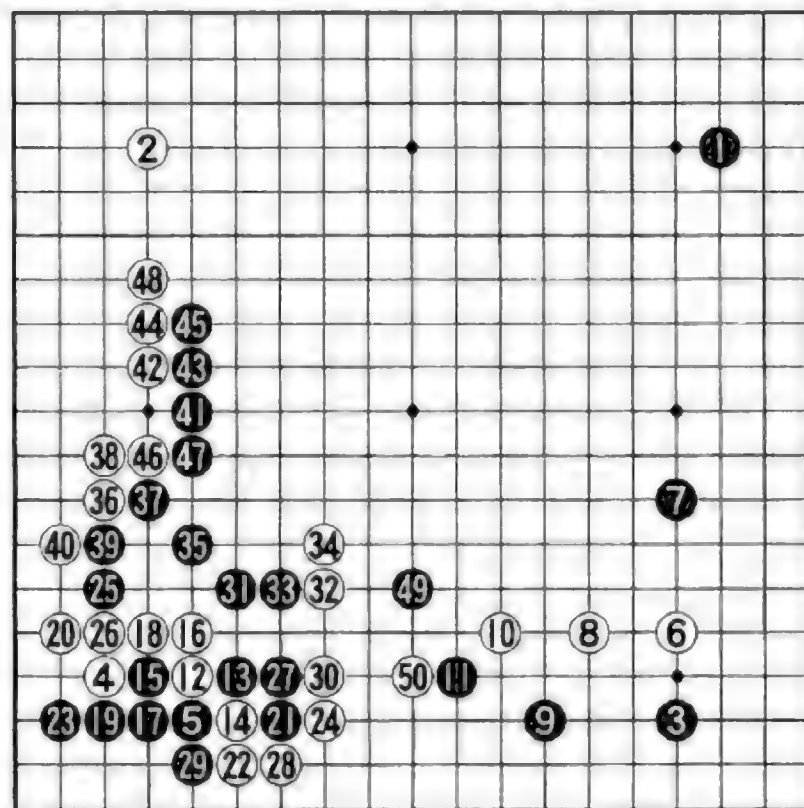


Figure 1 (1–50)

Figure 1 (1–50). Vying for the initiative

Both sides show a lot of fighting spirit in this game.

White 14 is an attempt to make Black overconcentrated. Black 15 is a natural counterattack. The resulting shape is unusual. White attempts to take profit on the left side while attacking, while Black in turn tries to seize the initiative with 49. Both sides were probably satisfied with the course of the game.

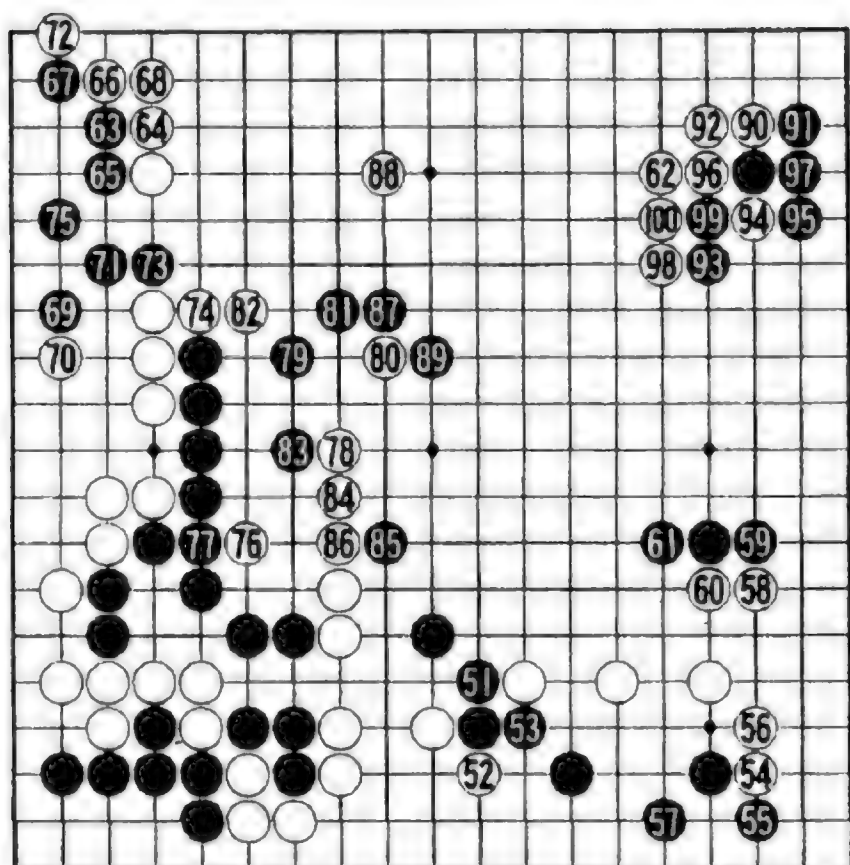


Figure 2 (51-100)

Figure 2 (51-100). White's good territorial prospects?

This is a game between two territorial players. White lives in sente on the bottom right, then switches to 62, but Black makes sure he doesn't fall behind by invading at 63.

When White expanded his top area with 88 to 100, some people were heard to say that the game looked promising for White, but Kobayashi was aiming at a fantastic move.

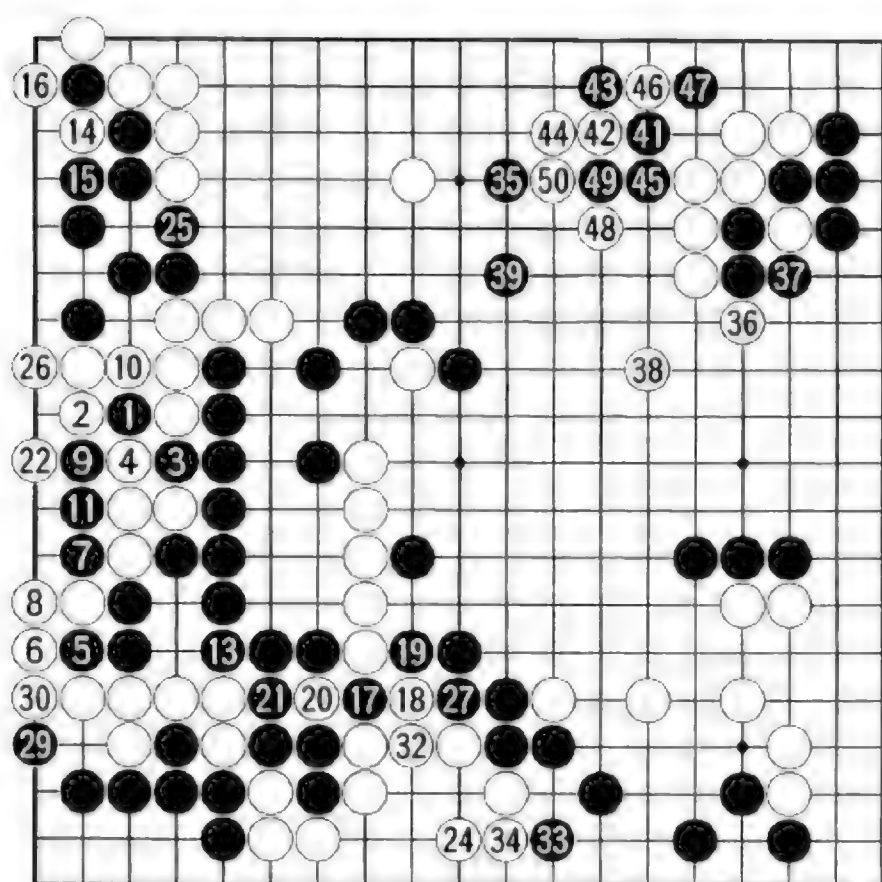


Figure 3 (101-150)
12: connects; ko: 23, 28, 31, 40

Figure 3 (101-150). A fiendish move

Black 1 is a fiendish move. It sets up a squeeze on the outside that Black plays in con-

junction with the ko of 17 and 19. This is so severe that it decides the game.

Figure 4 (151-200). Ignoring territory

Black ignores his territorial loss on the right side; instead, he sets about bringing down the large white group below with 89 on.

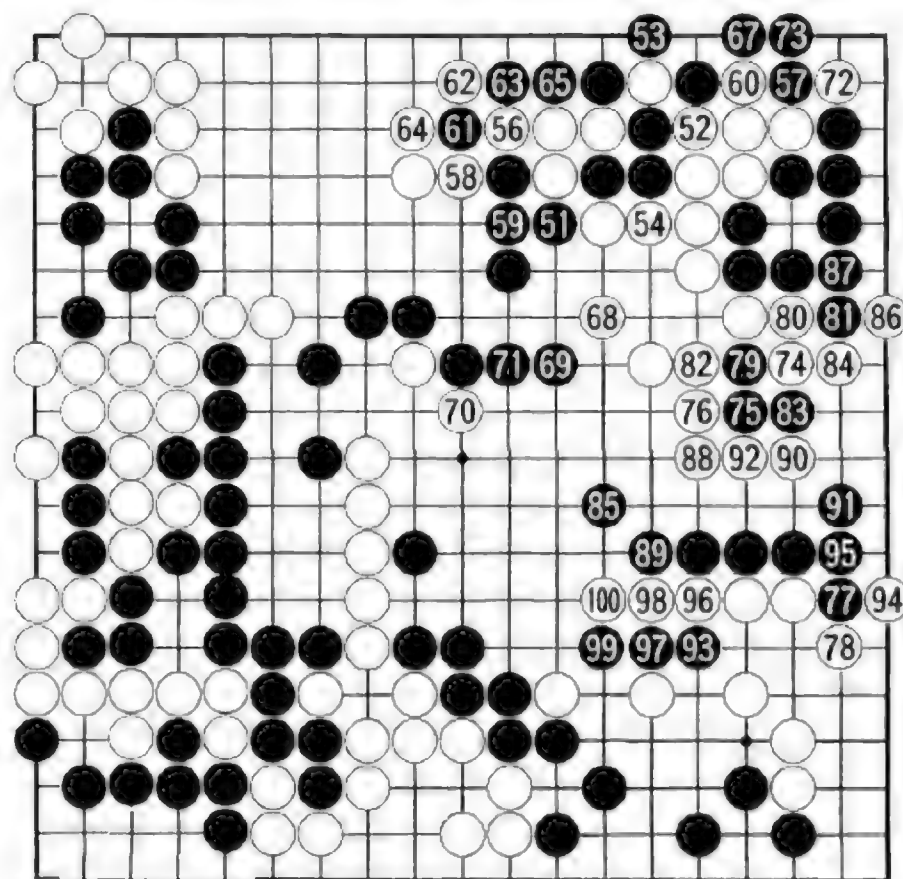


Figure 4 (151-200)
55: connects; 66: connects

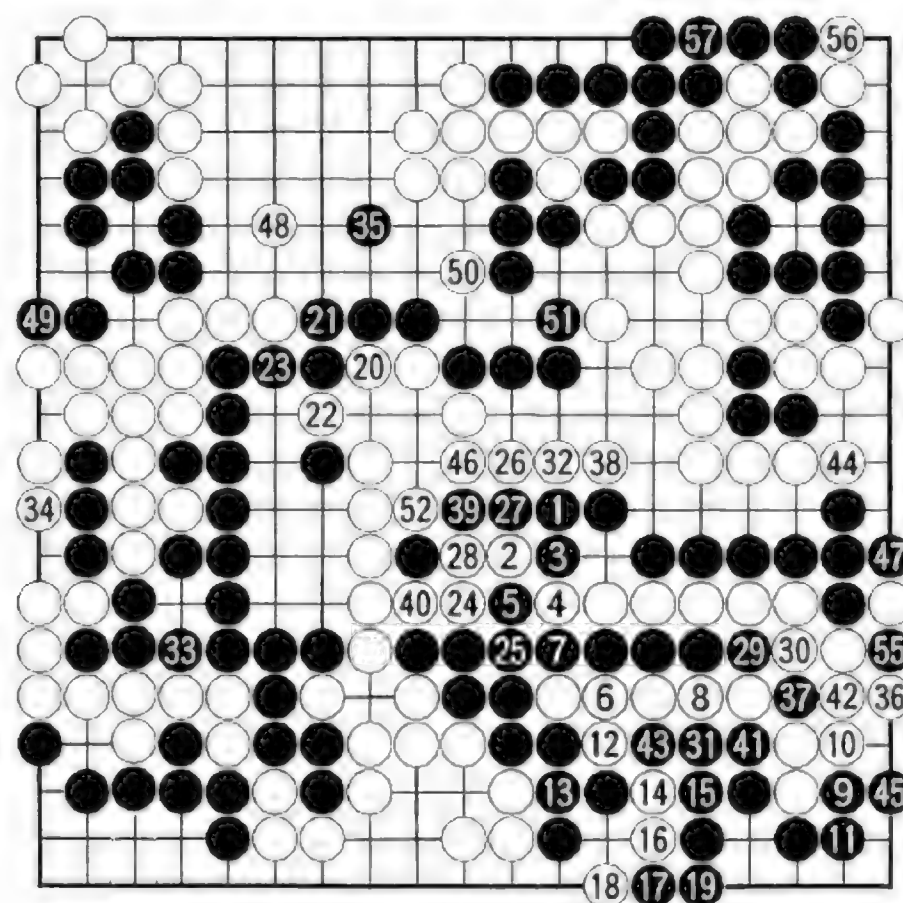


Figure 5 (201-257)
53: captures (at 37); 54: retakes

Figure 5 (201-257). Savage play

The exciting and aggressive play in this game is a side of Kobayashi we don't see very much of lately — perhaps because he can win without resorting to brute force.

White resigns after Black 257.

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The 45th Honinbo Title

Games Five to Seven

In this issue we present the final three games of the 1990 Honinbo title match. When we left the series after the fourth game in GW61, it looked very bad for the title-holder Cho Chikun: he was down 1-3 and he had just played one of the worst title-match games of his career. He had fallen into a trap, but not so much one that the challenger Kobayashi had set as one that he created for himself.

It would have been understandable if Cho had lost heart after this setback and the series had fizzled out, but Kobayashi returned the courtesy by making a bad misreading himself in the fifth game. He played what he expected to be the decisive move of the game, attacking the eye shape of a corner group from the inside, but this turned out to be a major blunder. Kobayashi is known for his expertise in life and death problems, which must have made the shock he suffered from his mistake all the greater. That gave Cho the chance to stage one of his patented fightbacks, and thereafter he seemed to hold the initiative.

With this successful defence, Cho prevented Kobayashi from completely dominating the Japanese title scene and also turned the tide in what till then had been a dismal year for him. Kobayashi remains the dominant figure in Japanese go, but once again he failed in his long-cherished ambition to become Honinbo.



Cho and Kobayashi receive bouquets at a reception organized by the local organizing committee the day before the game.

Game Five

White: Cho Chikun

Black: Kobayashi Koichi

Played in Utsunomiya City on 9, 10 July 1990.

Our commentary is a round-table discussion, with the participants this time being Rin Tengen, Haruyama Isamu 9-dan, who was the Mainichi commentator on the game, and Arimura Hiroshi 3-dan, who set a new record in 1990 by winning five games in a row in the paramasu section of the 15th Kisei tournament. The reporter for Igo Club is Kobori Keiji.

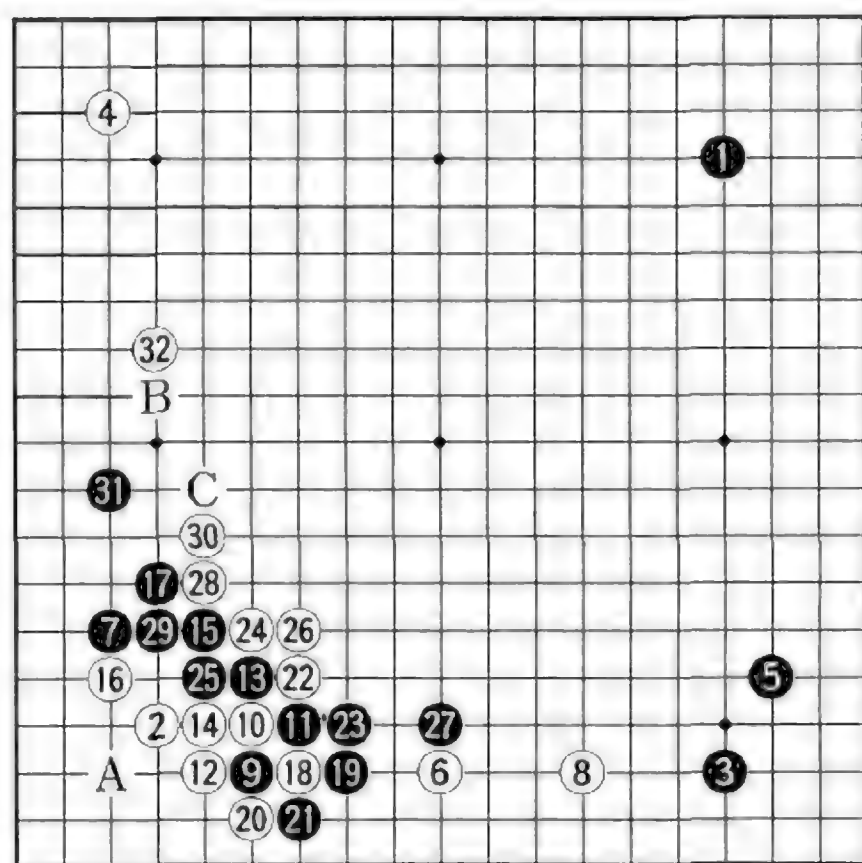


Figure 1 (1-32)

Figure 1 (1-32). *An unusual fuseki*

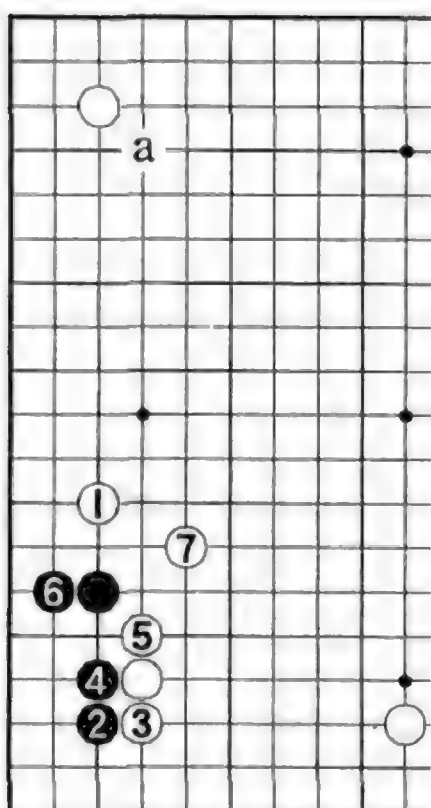
Rin: White 8 is unusual. The double approach move of 9 is also a little . . .

Igo Club: One felt something of the fighting spirit of both players.

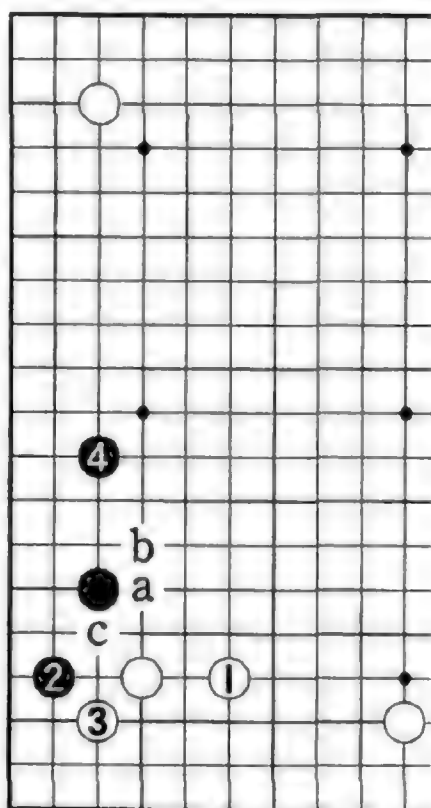
Arimura: Would a pincer be the usual move for 8? White 1 in *Dia. 1*. Even so, the prospect of a shoulder hit by Black at 'a' is disagreeable.

Rin: Right. Well, the usual thing would be either the pincer or White 'a'–Black 'b'–White 'c' in *Dia. 2*.

IC: Wait a minute. Isn't White 1 in *Dia. 2* the usual move?



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

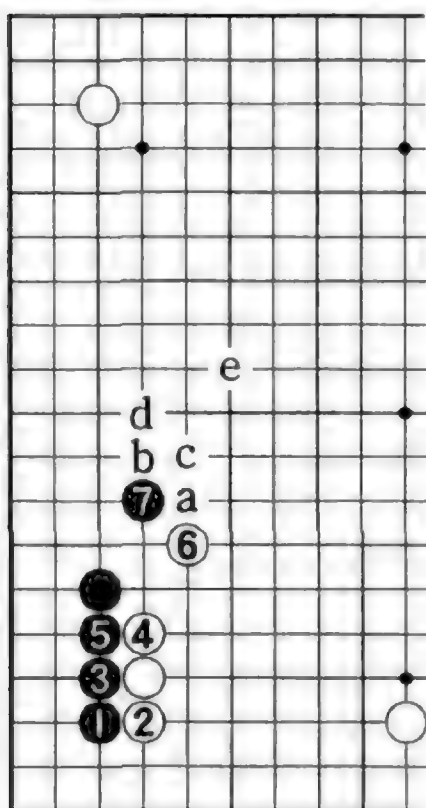
Rin: No, not really. In this fuseki that would make the game too simple, favouring Black. It's a bit difficult to explain, but one doesn't feel like defending at 1.

Haruyama: Could Black 9 be at A? But Kobayashi chose the strong move.

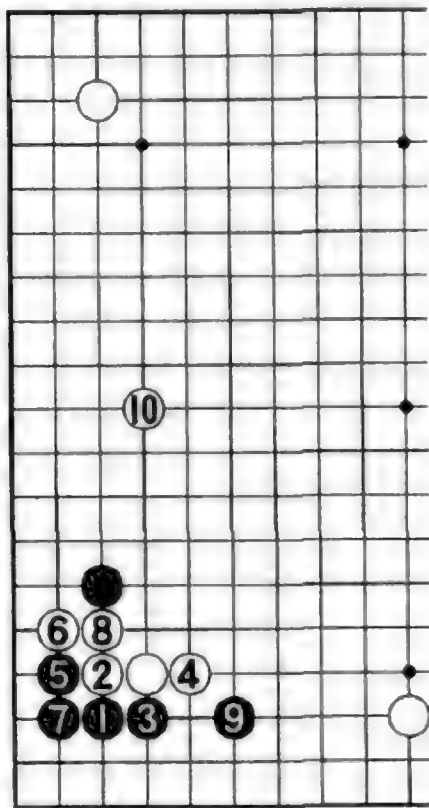
Rin: White's just made a two-space extension to 8. Doesn't an approach move at 9 feel a little unreasonable?

Haruyama: That's the feeling I get. But Black 9 was played quickly.

Rin: Kobayashi always plays fast. He plays both good and bad moves in a flash.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Arimura: If Black plays at 1 in Dia. 3, which side will White block on?

Rin: Both look possible. Well, let's try the standard 2 to 6.

Arimura: If Black 7, White expands with 'a' through 'e'.

Haruyama: Is White 2 in Dia. 4 also pos-

sible? White takes up position with 10, giving a reasonable game.

Rin: Either way is reasonable. Each sequence is a joseki, so each gives a reasonable game. (laughter)

IC: A large-scale fight started from the bottom-left corner. Games between Cho and Kobayashi don't seem to follow the standard fuseki patterns. They open up a new world, which perhaps shows how full of fighting spirit they are.

IC: White attaches against the weaker stone with 10. Isn't this unusual? [The go proverb advises one not to attach against a weak stone, for this helps it to strengthen itself]

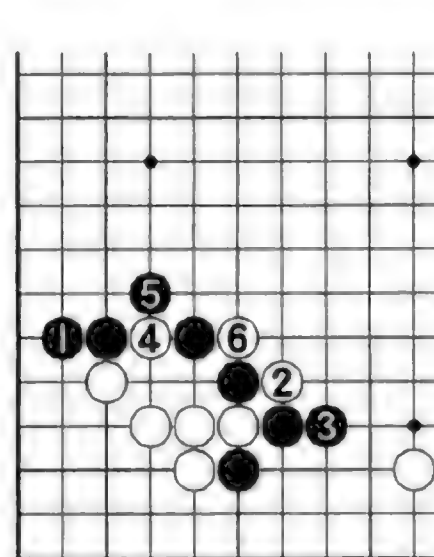
Haruyama: Yes, but Cho's planning to cut at 22.

Rin: It's unusual, but there's going to be a contest to see who reads better after 22.

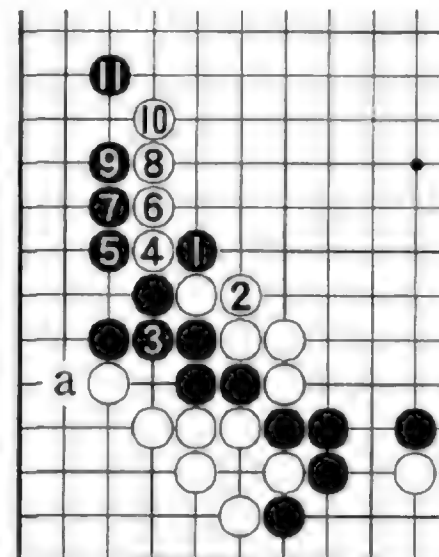
Arimura: White 16 is a tight move.

IC: If Black descends at 1 in Dia. 5, White can catch the key stone with 2 to 6. This is about the only reference diagram I can provide for this game.

Rin: It's a splendid diagram. (laughter) That's why 17 is natural.



Dia. 5



were really impressed with 32. Myself included.

Rin: When you see it played, you realize it's good.

Haruyama: Apparently Kobayashi expected White B and planned to answer it by attaching at C. Kobayashi knows all about Cho's go, but his prediction was out by a line.

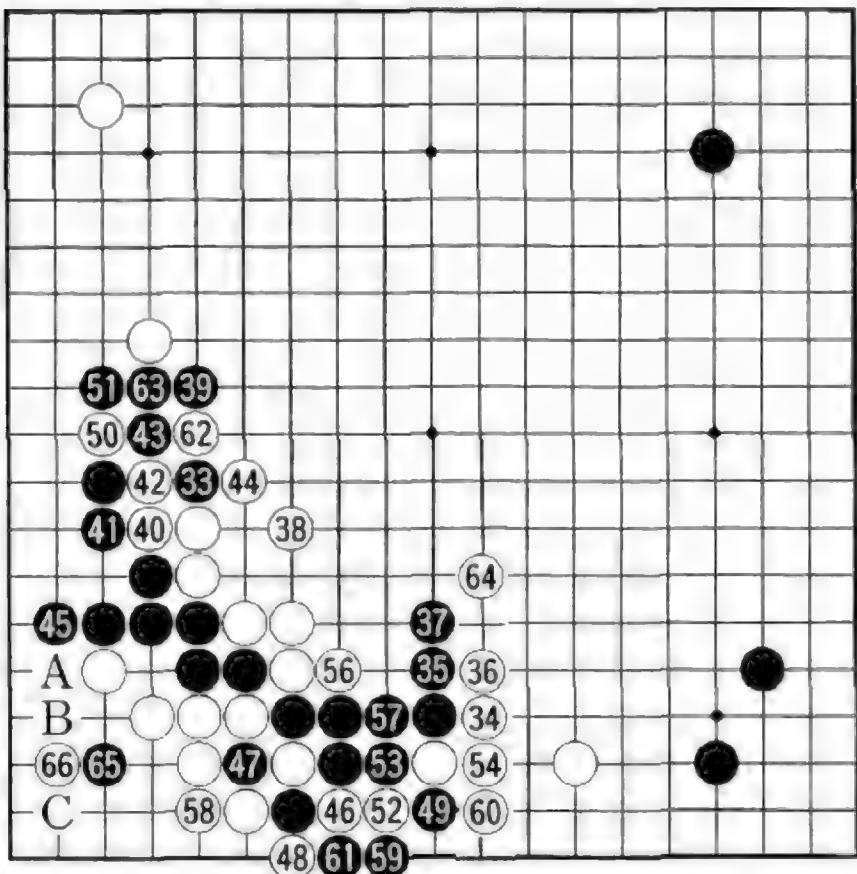
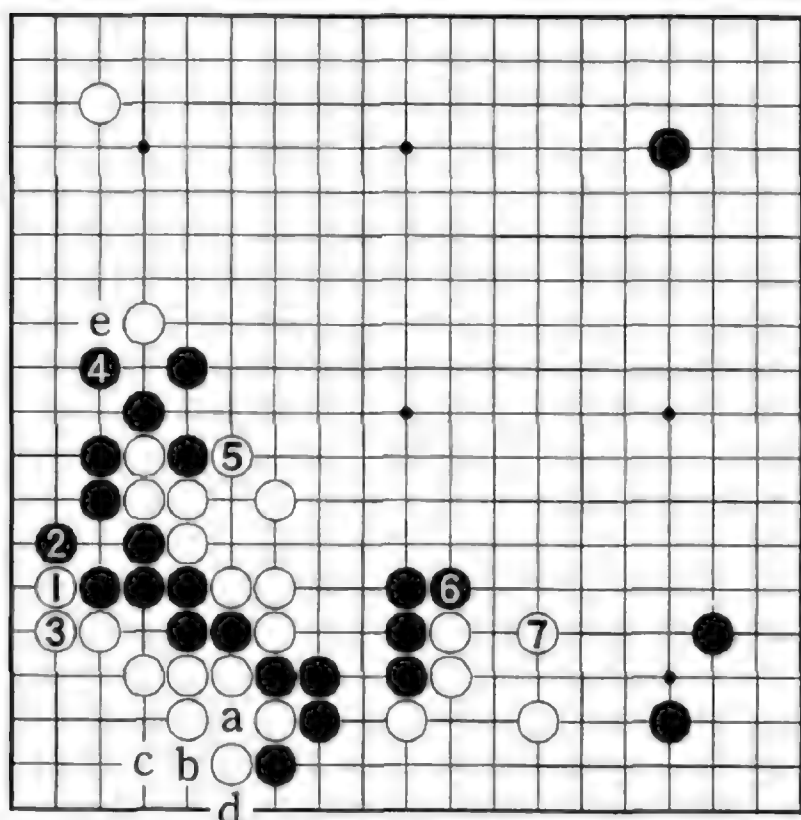


Figure 2 (33-66)
55: connects



Dia. 7

Figure 2 (33-66). Surprises for both

Arimura: The shape Black makes with 33 and 39 is not quite...

Haruyama: Yes, White plays 40 to 44 immediately. So Kobayashi said he should have played 39 at 44. But then Cho said he would have cut with 40, 42, and 62.

Rin: H'm. Does 44 make White thick?

Arimura: But Black descends at 45.

Haruyama: That's right. So how about if White plays 1 and 3 in Dia. 7? What do you think?

Rin: Black must play 4, so White ataris at 5. Usually Cho would never let slip a chance to play this kind of hanetsugi (hane + connection).

Haruyama: If White does play it, the corner is alive without another move even if Black captures with 'a', then Black 'b', White 'c', Black 'd' follow. And White can look forward to blocking at 'e'.

Rin: This variation is quite adequate for White. He has plenty of territory, plus thickness.

Arimura: Answering Black 45 at A would be painful. Black takes the ko at 47, White plays 58...

Haruyama: That's why White answers with 46. This was the way Cho read it out at the outset. But his analysis was too facile: he overlooked Black 49.

IC: This stops White from linking up. If Black uses 49 to connect his two stones in atari, White can link up with 52.

Haruyama: At this point Cho had to make the sealed move: he was on the spot. Because he'd just been hit with a move he'd overlooked. 'That was a terrible place to seal a move,' he grumbled later. 'A little earlier and I would have had a good night's sleep.' For Black's part, should he play 49 now and make his opponent seal while still upset or would it be better to give him a shock by striking with 49 the next morning? Kobayashi's judgement was that he should play the move now.

Rin: Ha ha. Off-the-board strategy? But the sealed move of 50 was an incredible move.

IC: Incredible is the word.

Haruyama: Kobayashi was astonished. When Sugiuchi, the referee, opened the sealed envelope he couldn't find the move. Not many moves recently have aroused so much discussion.

Arimura: It makes capturing at 62 absolute sente and aims at attacking the black group below in the centre.

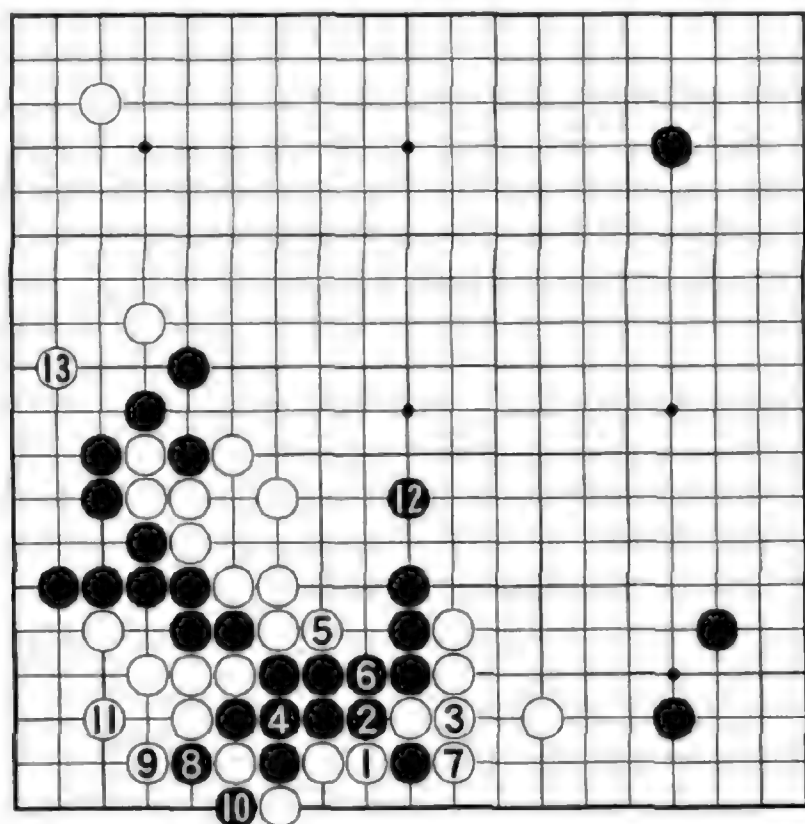
Rin: But, as we see in the next figure, it endangers the corner white group. When he played 50, Cho had read out everything, including the life and death of the corner group.



Cho points to the move he missed.

White loses a lot of points when Black seizes the stone with 51.

Haruyama: I thought of following *Dia. 8*. Even though Black captures with 8 and 10, White lives in the corner and develops at a leisurely pace. Even so, wouldn't White have a promising game?



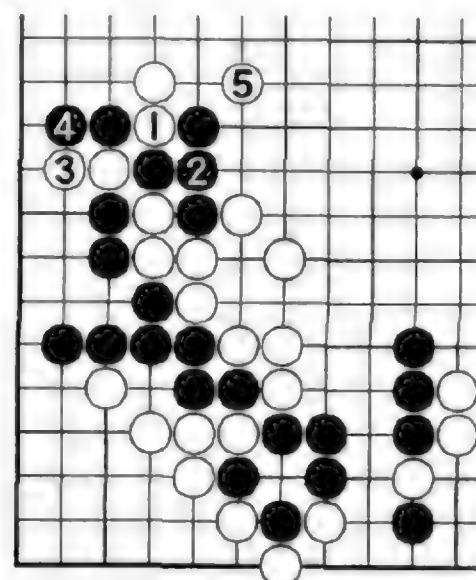
Dia. 8

Rin: Ah, you may be right. This variation certainly looks like giving a drawn-out game, but Cho goes for the violent approach. Another threat he has after 51 is the squeeze in *Dia. 9*. The cut is an incredible move, but it's violent.

IC: In fact, Cho connects at 58, letting Black

capture two stones. And he has read out that the corner is alive as it is. So he attacks in the centre with 62 and 64.

Haruyama: Cho apparently believed that this captured the black group, but the centre fight was much more difficult than he had anticipated.



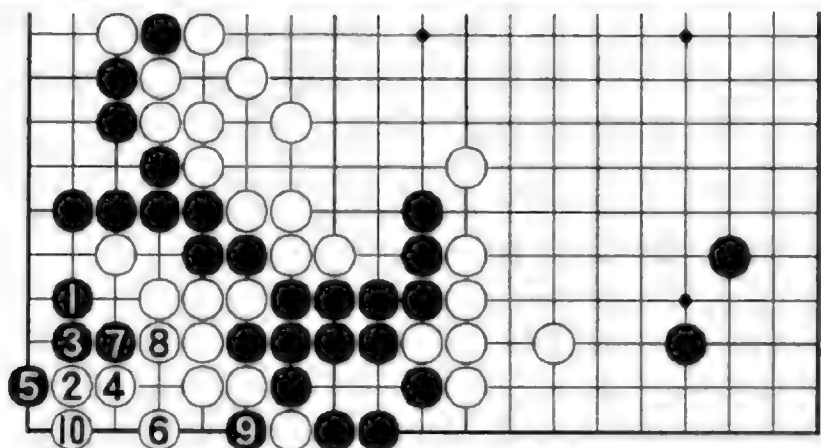
Dia. 9

IC: Black invades with 65. Kobayashi was convinced that he had an attack in the corner.

Haruyama: White 66 is an exquisite shinogi move [one that saves a weak group]. If next Black B, White pulls back at C. Cho had read out that he lived unconditionally. Kobayashi was convinced he had an approach-move ko.

Arimura: If he does, Black can amplify the problem in the middle, create ko threats, start the ko and the game is over.

Rin: That was Kobayashi's intention. Well, what was the correct way to play in the corner?



Dia. 10

Haruyama: *Dia. 10*. Harass the corner in the usual way — reduce White to the minimum eye space.

Rin: Ah, that would be terrible. In the game White ends up living in the corner with eight points, so Black loses about six points here. So, if Black had rescued his centre group and played like this in the corner, it would have been a good, close game.

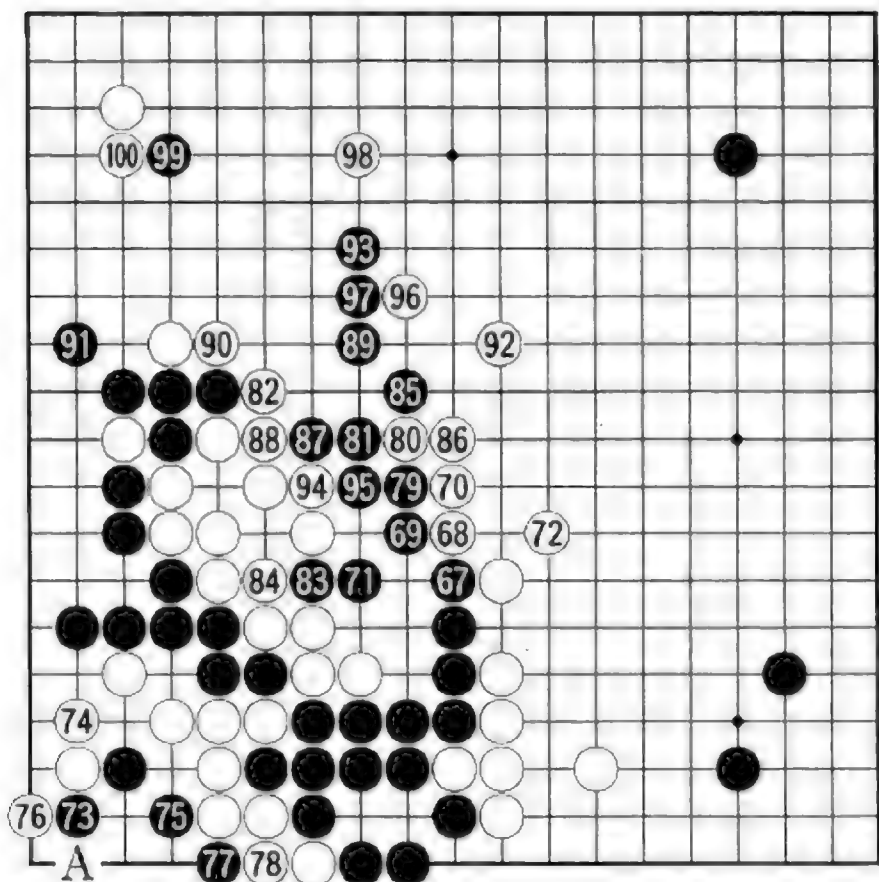


Figure 3 (67-100)

Figure 3 (67-100). Cho outreads the challenger.

Haruyama: What if White tries to capture Black with 72 at 79? [The players looked at various complicated sequences, omitted by *Igo Club* for reasons of space.] White 79 is unreasonable. Black 71 and White 72 seem to be the best moves. They're playing well.

Rin: Each player thinks the other has misread the bottom left corner. For Kobayashi, the problem is when to put into effect his 'approach-move ko'.

Haruyama: If he'd gone ahead and settled the shape in the centre, then played in the corner, the shock from his misreading might have led him to resign there and then. Since

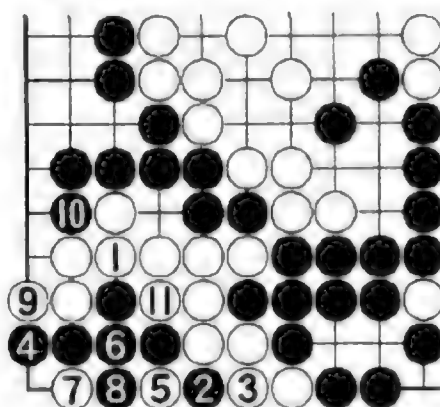
he plays in the corner with the centre still open, he loses in a wishy-washy fashion.

IC: Psychologically this was a delicate moment.

Haruyama: The sequence Kobayashi read out was *Dia. 11* after Black 75. After all, it's only common sense to think that White can't fight properly with this gaping hole [at 1] in his position. Black 2 and 4 give an approach-move ko.

Rin: This corner is big, so if Black got an approach-move ko he would win.

Haruyama: However, he got a shock when White made a hane at 76. Cho played this move quickly.



Dia. 11

Rin: He'd read it out when he played 50.

Haruyama: The decisive shock came when White connected at 78 in answer to 77. Expecting White A, he'd been consoling himself with the thought that he could still pull off something in the corner.

Rin: This is quite exciting if Black can't do anything.

IC: What happens next?

Arimura: In the game Black plays 1, White 2, Black 'a', White 8 in *Dia. 12*... Even if Black blocks at 3 next, White gets a double ko, so Black is captured. Connecting at 1 in *Dia. 13* leads to another double ko, but this is a double-ko seki.

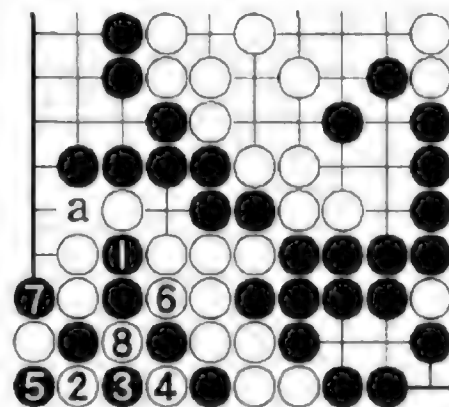
Rin: That means that *Dia. 13* was the correct way for Black to play.

Haruyama: Even so, it's gote for Black. Compared to *Dia. 10*, Black has played a two-point move, no, it's less than two points, in gote.

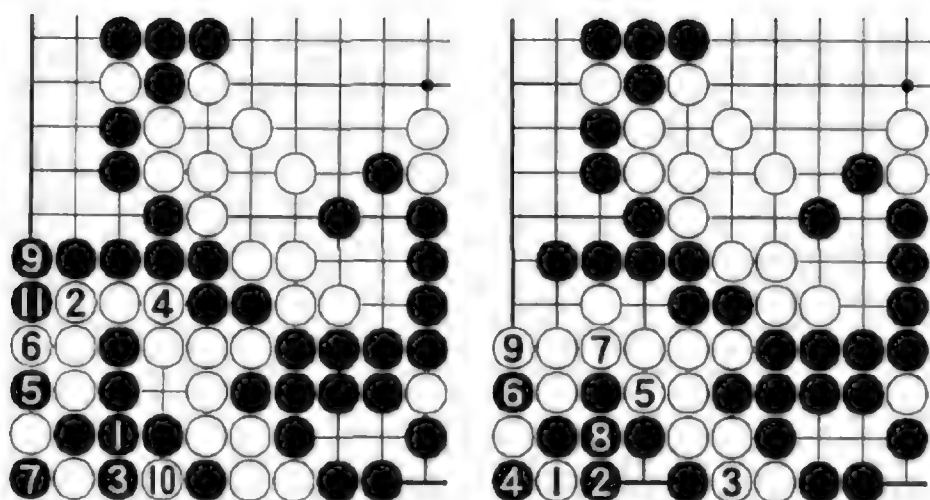
Rin: That's right. Kobayashi must have felt as if he'd suddenly fallen off a cliff.

Arimura: Instead of 78, Black had expected White A, that is, the approach-move ko in *Dia. 14*.

Haruyama: So he's received two shocks: one with 76 and another with 78.



Dia. 12



Dia. 13
8: at 5

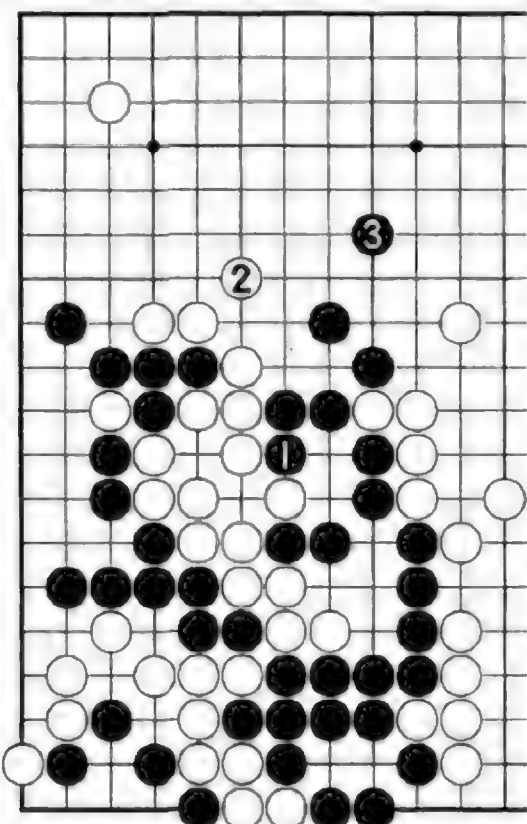
Dia. 14

Rin: The six-point loss is terrible. Even Kobayashi couldn't hope to recover. Black's got to worry about the eye shape of his large group too.

Haruyama: White has a lot of territory and he's built a wall in the centre, so Black can't expect his right-side territory to increase much.

IC: The game has already passed its climax?

Haruyama: The players didn't have much to say about the rest of the game. Let me see, Black let White plays 94 in sente. This is an important point. Kobayashi said that instead of 93 he should have played at 1 in Dia. 15. Then, instead of a one-space jump, the knight's move of 3 would have been better, he said.

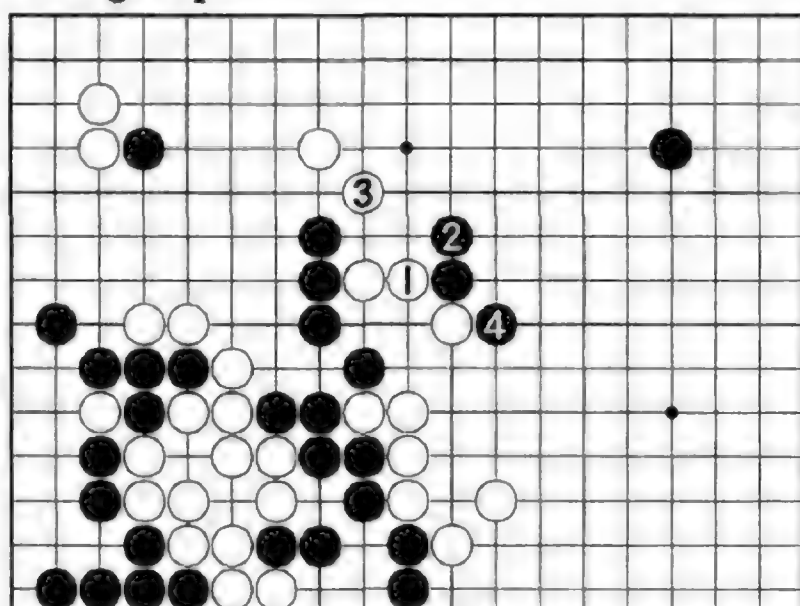


Dia. 15

Rin: This is a bit of an improvement. But the game is still close on the board.

Haruyama: There's nothing special after this, but apparently Black 99 takes out some insurance for Black's large group. If White answers Black 1 in Figure 4 with White 1 in Dia. 16, Black takes profit on the other side

with 2 and 4. The marked stone will help him save his group.



Dia. 16

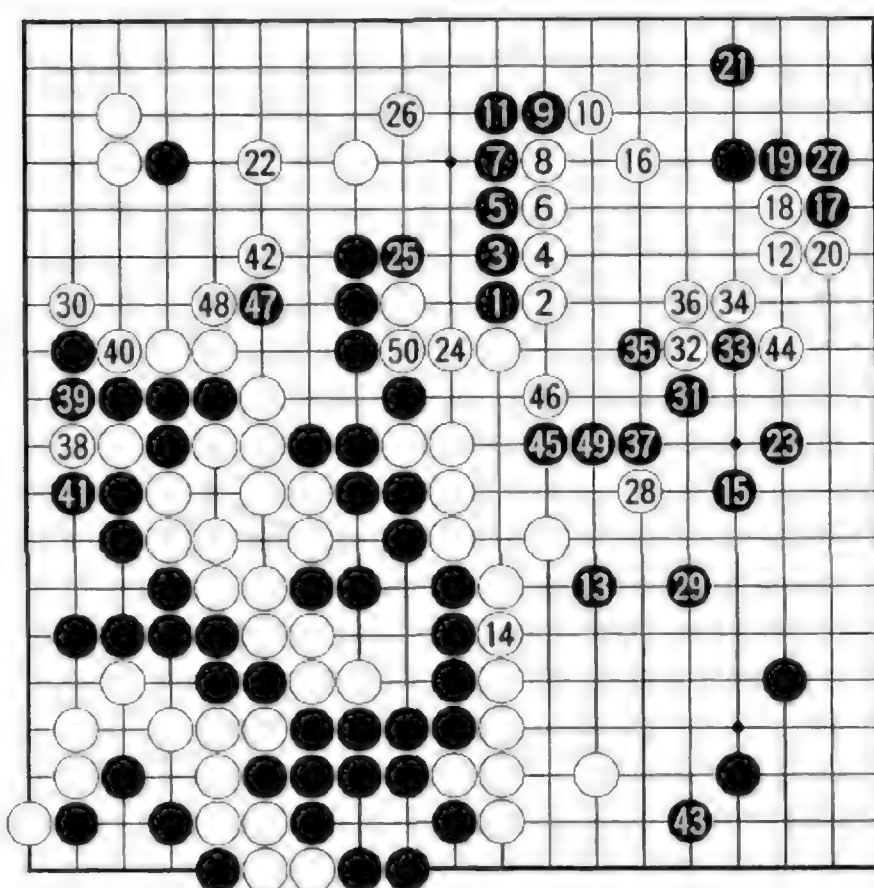


Figure 4 (101-150)

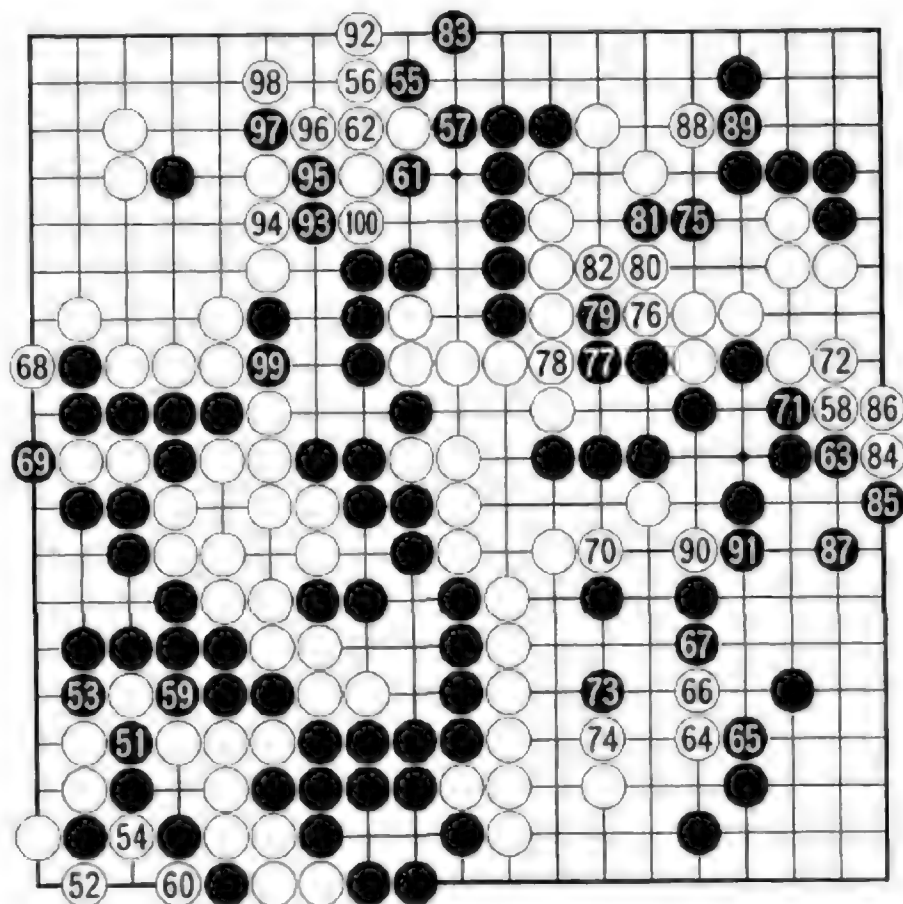
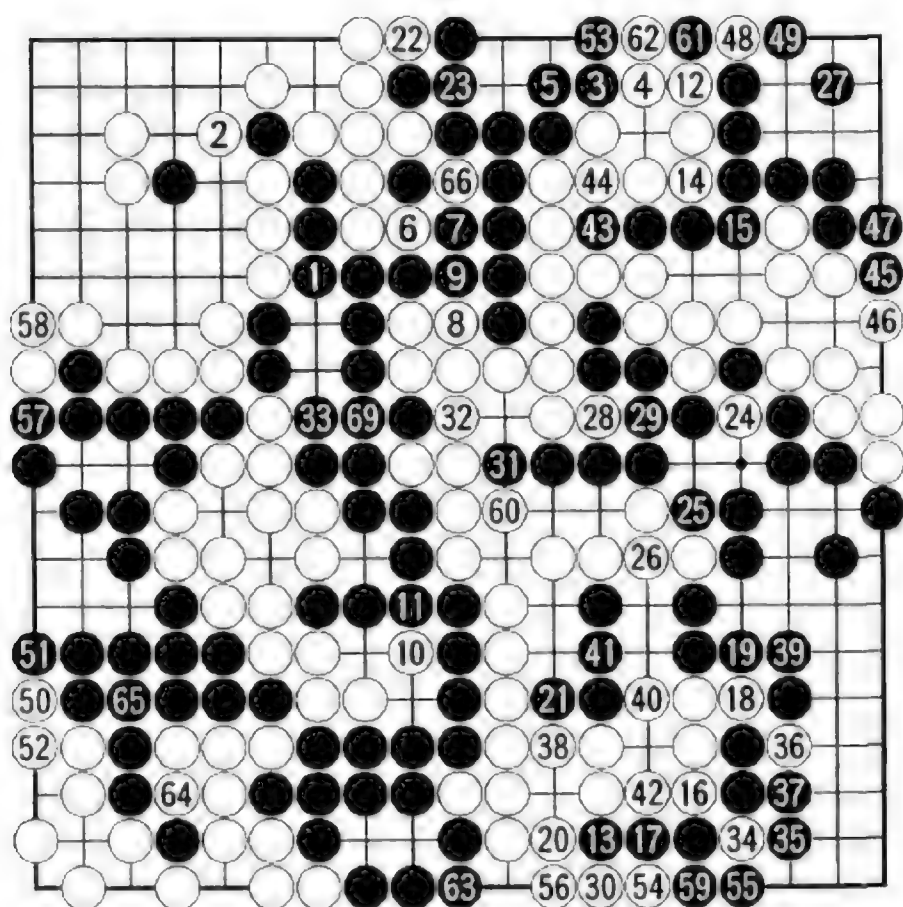


Figure 5 (151-200)



Kobayashi ruefully points to the move that he missed: his mistake was much more costly than Cho's.



*Figure 6 (201–269)
67, 68: each connects a ko.*

Figures 4, 5, 6

Rin: This was a victory for Chikun's reading power. The reason why Kobayashi lost was that he broke off his analysis halfway.

Haruyama: But no one would think he had to read any further in that position [Dia. 11] — playing with that gap in your position is hard to imagine, so naturally you'd assume that White would connect.

IC: You even get the feeling that playing 49 just before the adjournment backfired. It stirred Cho up and made him analyse the position completely. (laughter) Well, maybe you can't say one way or the other.

Arimura: There was that Honinbo title match game between Rin Sensei and Kato Sensei. Kato misread a life-and-death position.

Rin: That's right. It's a strange feeling. You want to make maximum use of your opponent's mistake, making life for your group at the best time. Making the opponent attack unnecessarily. [See GW15, p.19.]

IC: Different strategies from purely go strategies come into play. I can believe it's a strange feeling. We amateurs do it all the time. 'Has he realized?' we wonder. Sometimes the reason for a loss is that the opponent woke up too soon.

Haruyama: However, 3–2 makes the match interesting.

IC: As far as the figures go, Kobayashi still has the advantage 2 to 1, but that's not the real position.

Rin: I think the chances are closer to even.

IC: What do you think, Arimura?

Arimura: It's a fantastic series. I'm learning a lot, so I want to see as many games as possible.

Rin: So you want the match to go to seven games? The more the merrier for the spectators.

IC: The way the match seesaws is incredibly exciting, with first Kobayashi outreading Cho, then Cho outreading Kobayashi. One-sided series are a bore.

White wins by 7 1/2 points.

(Igo Club, September 1990)

Game Six

White: Kobayashi Koichi

Black: Cho Chikun

Played in Nagano City on 18, 19 July 1990.

In this game Kobayashi seemed to be still affected by the shock of his misreading in the fifth game. He went badly astray in his positional judgement, normally one of his strengths.

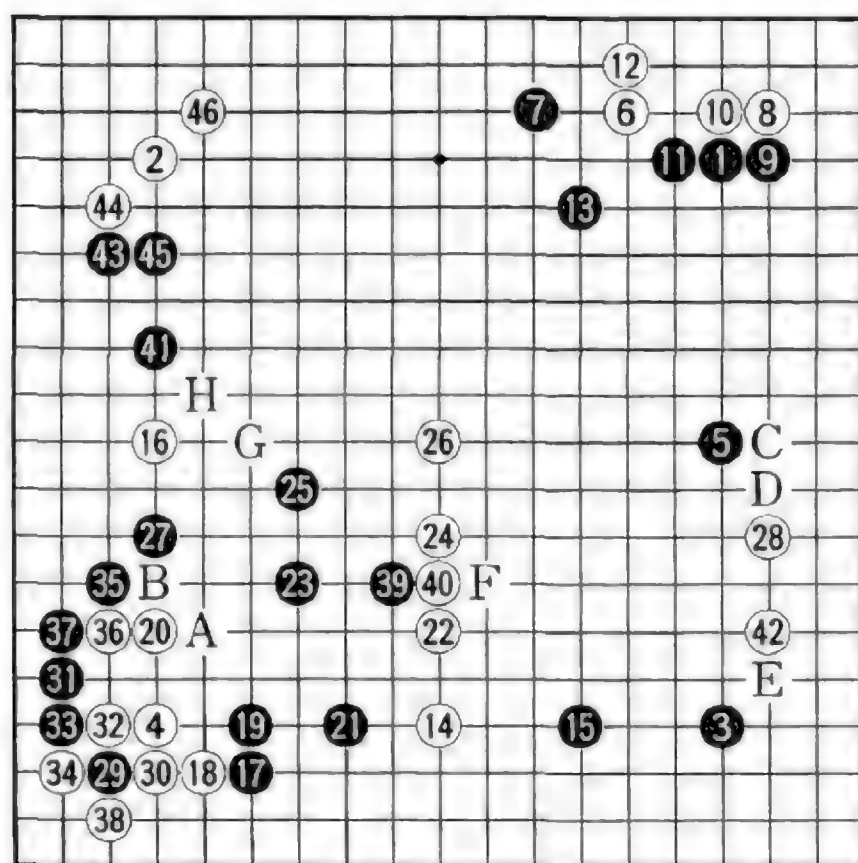


Figure 1 (1-46)

Figure 1 (1-46). Kobayashi goes wrong in the fuseki.

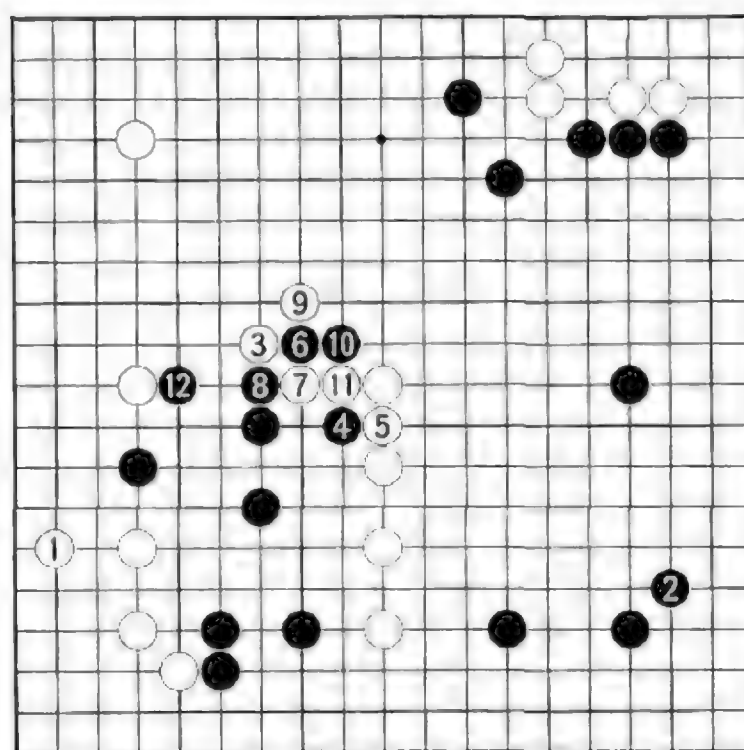
The sanren-sei is quite unusual for Cho. His own comment, 'I can remember playing it before', shows just how unusual. Up to 15 it looks like a Takemiya game.

For 21, Kamimura Haruo 9-dan, the Mainichi commentator, suggested attaching at A; if White B, Black could then cap at 22. After the game Cho agreed that this might have been better.

White's series of jumps from 22 to 26 limits the potential of Black's moyo to the right, which is why Kamimura queried 21.

Black 27. Takemiya would probably jump out once more, but 27 is more in keeping with the Cho style, which is to lay waste to territory early.

White counters with his own invasion at 28, but Kobayashi had second thoughts. 'The result to 38 was a little painful. So should I have answered patiently at 1 in *Dia. 1*?' Black would defend at 2, then White would attack at 3. The two players worked out the continuation to 12 after the game. Black has no trouble looking after this group, so he is satisfied. In short, though 28 was considered dubious, no definite conclusion was reached as to how White should have played.



Dia. 1

Black 39. Professionals in the pressroom expected Black to play the iron pillar of C next. When Cho sank into deep thought, some players wondered if he might try D or perhaps E. After 86 minutes, the slowest move of the game, Cho surprised everyone by peeping at 39, then pinching at 41. Kamimura called 39 a 'resolute peep'. Black can also peep on the other side at F, so if possible he'd prefer to put off the decision till later, but Cho has decided that a stone is necessary for the fight he anticipates after 41.

Once again Kobayashi surprises Cho by ignoring him. However, when Black plays 43 and 45, making it difficult for White to pull out his solitary stone, he takes the lead. In other

words, not pulling the stone out — with G or H — was a mistake. If White escaped, Black would still have to worry about the thinness of his position below. (Ohira 9-dan, the referee for this game, called 42 the losing move.)

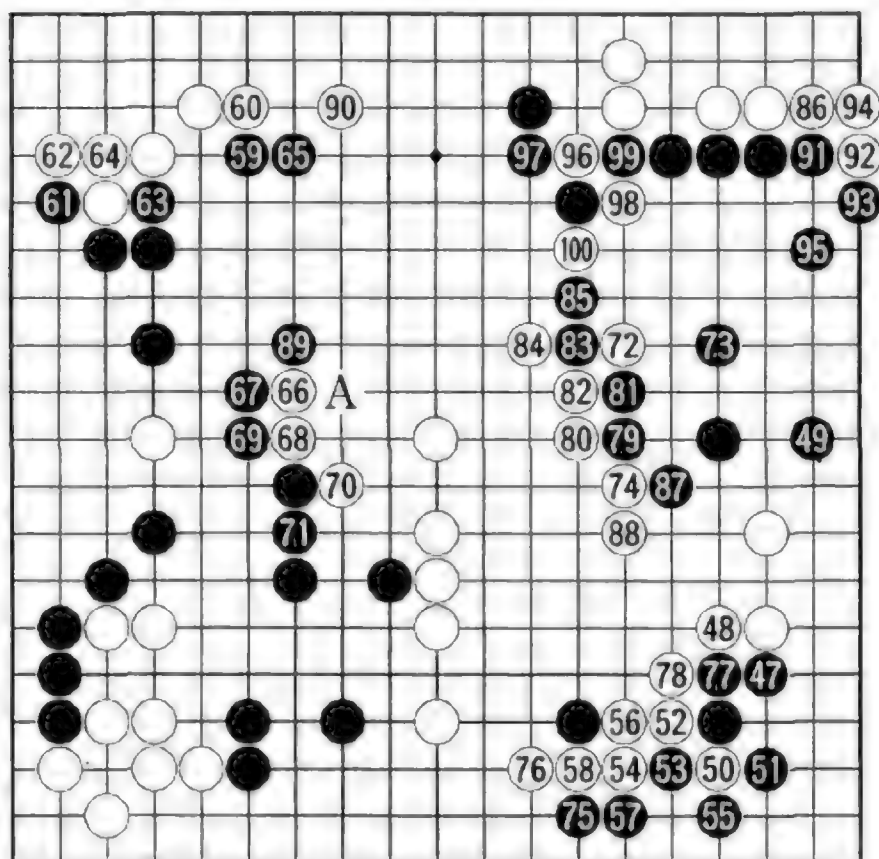
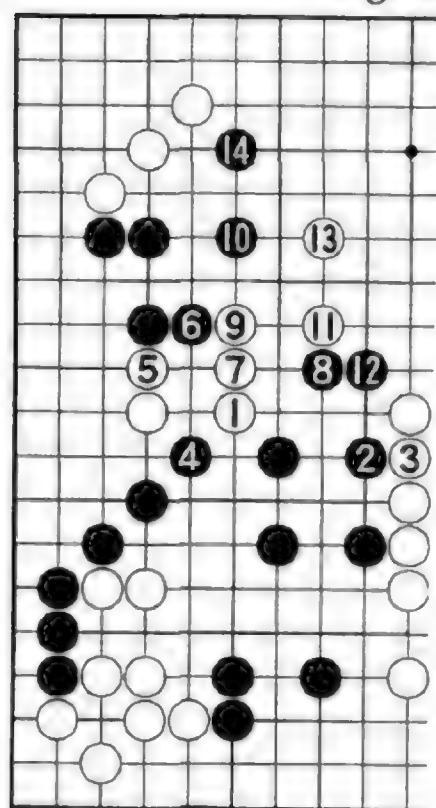
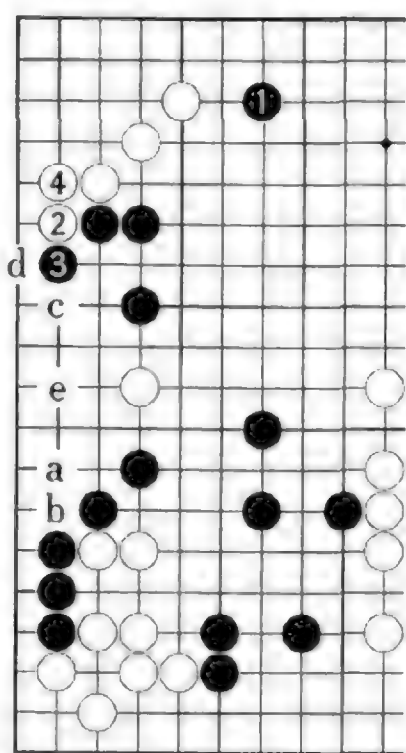


Figure 2 (47-100)



Dia. 2



Dia. 3

Figure 2 (47-100). The game is decided.

Black 47. The sealed move.

It is already too late to save White 16. For reference, Ohira gives the sequence in *Dia. 2*. Escaping lets Black set up a double attack on this and the corner group. That means that White had to escape before the marked stones were played, though even then 2 and 4 would have been an effective combination.

Black 49 works very well. White launches a surprise attack on the corner with 50, but al-

though he seems to achieve his primary objective up to 58, no one was impressed with the result. Rather, securing the corner with such good aji seems to have made Black's lead more definite.

Black 59 is a move that no one predicted. Ohira and Kamimura expected Black 1 in *Dia. 3* and their first reaction was that 59 was slack territorially. However, their surprise changed to admiration when they saw Cho's continuation.

If Black plays 1 in *Dia. 3*, White will play 2 and 4. Black now needs to add a stone on the side, but doing so would be unbearable. As it is, however, the white stone playing dead threatens to spring back to life with White 'a' through 'e'. After 65 in the figure, just about all the life in the white stone has been snuffed out.

Cho spent 52 minutes on 59, to good effect.

Kamimura: 'Black's lead is fixed after 65. White doesn't get anything resembling a chance after this.'

White 66 is a little deep: it seems to invite a counterattack at A, but White would welcome the complications of a new fight. Cho calmly assesses the position and calculates that 67 is enough to win.

Cho went into byo-yomi on 77, but the game was already decided.

White 100 caused some excitement, but the continuation to 8 in Figure 3 doesn't affect Black's lead.

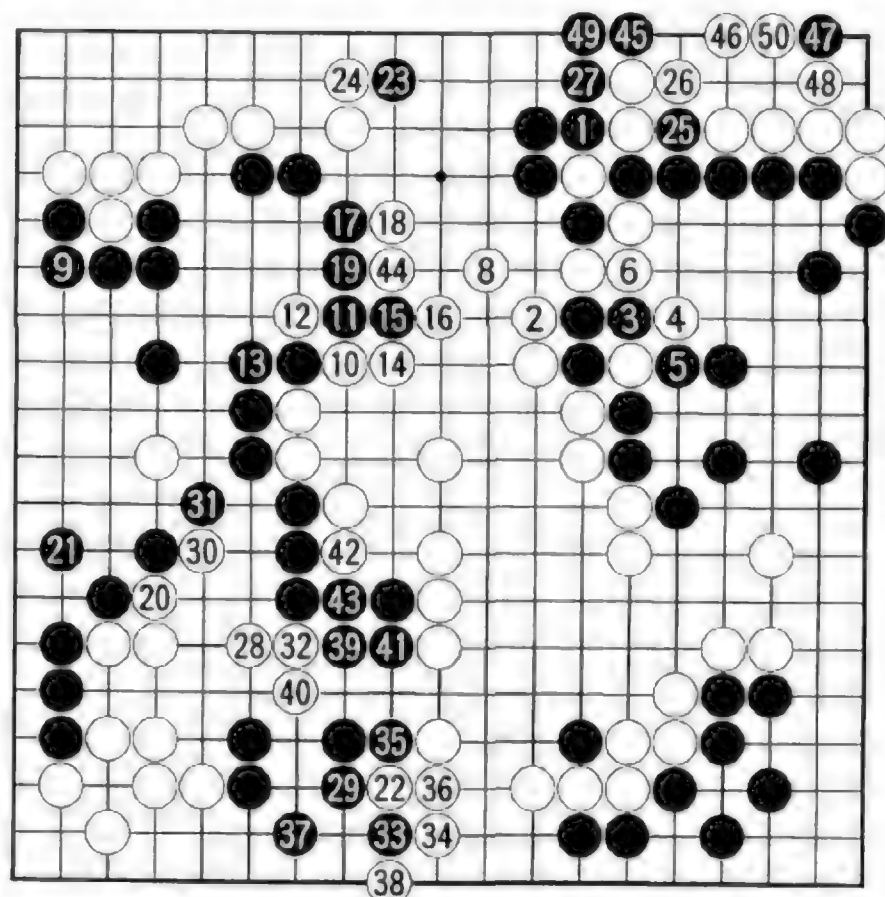


Figure 3 (101-150)

7: connects

Figure 3 (101–150). *No danger*

On 9 Cho went down to his last minute of byo-yomi.

White 28 looks dangerous, but Cho had already read this position out much earlier.

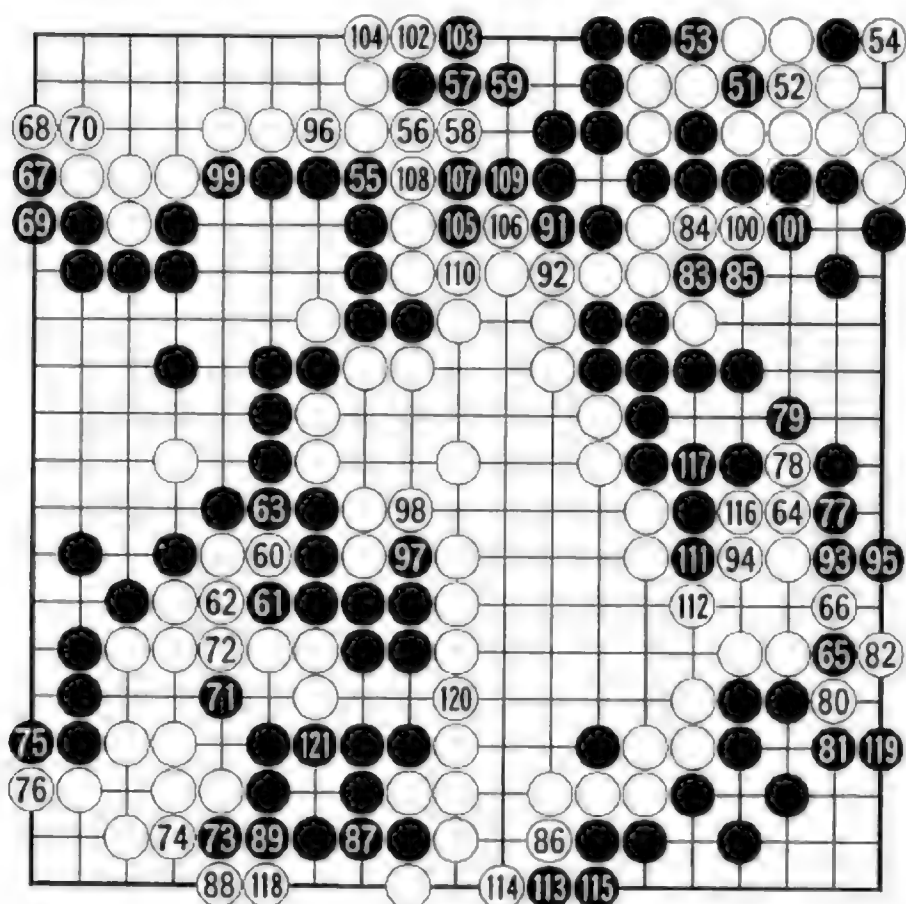


Figure 4 (151–221)
90: connects at 51

Figure 4 (151–221). *A big loss*

Kobayashi looked crestfallen when the game ended, as well he might considering that he couldn't readily identify the reason for his defeat. 'I'm not sure why I lost,' he said in an interview. 'Around the sealed move I thought it was a difficult game for both sides . . . Was there something funny about my fuseki?'

This comment perhaps indicates that his positional judgment was astray. It's almost unthinkable for a professional to lose by such a big margin and not be aware of his bad moves. Things were not right with Kobayashi.

Black wins by 6 1/2 points.

Game Seven

White: Cho Chikun

Black: Kobayashi Koichi

Played at Izu on 25, 26 July 1990.

Commentary by Cho Chikun.

'Cho loses badly.'

This was probably the result most people expected before the series began. Sad to say, I felt the same way. This had been the worst

year of the 20 or so years of my professional career. It was not until July that I was finally able to rack up more wins than losses for the year.

The year before last I won the Tengen title, then in spring last year the Judan: my form was improving little by little. Then my comeback as Honinbo gave me one of the big three titles. I had finally secured a beachhead for overtaking Kobayashi Kisei Meijin: his back had come into view. But this was a major hallucination. Perhaps in some way I was too impatient. Little by little I was pushed back, losing the Tengen title at the end of last year and the Judan title this spring.

Instead of my challenging Kobayashi for one of his titles, I found myself being stripped of my own titles, then I was confronted with Kobayashi as the challenger for my sole remaining title.

Since the 9th Kisei title match I fought with Kobayashi immediately after my serious traffic accident, I have respected Kobayashi. The way he fought then can be described in one word: magnificent. Though I was in that state [playing in a wheelchair], he concentrated on the board and shut out all extraneous thoughts. If the positions had been reversed, I wonder if I would have been able to fight so single-mindedly.



More flowers for Cho and Kobayashi.

Since then Kobayashi has steadily piled up the title defences and continued to stand at the peak of the go world. What a contrast to my wretched form! No matter what angle you viewed it from, I had no chance of winning. I just hoped that at least I could avoid a straight loss; I felt that I would have fulfilled my responsibility if I could manage to take the series to the 6th game or if possible to the 7th.

How pathetic. Usually each side should approach a title match with the conviction that he's certain to win, and with a straight four wins too. If the series then went to seven games, that would make an ideal match. How pitiful my approach was, just hoping to be able to play as many games as possible.

My great upset is a mischief perpetrated by the gods. Divine mercy: we'll give you one more chance. For me this series was a learning experience. I would like to get a little stronger and fight once more with Kobayashi. The urge to fight has suddenly welled up within me.

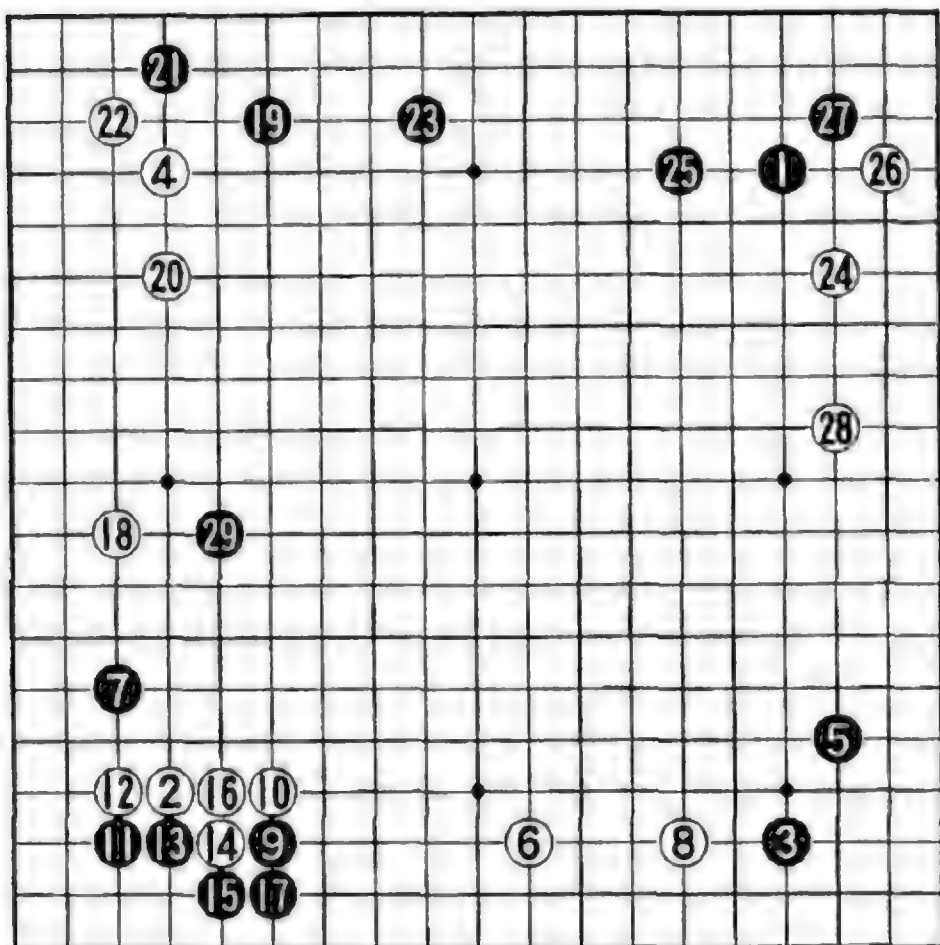


Figure 1 (1-29)

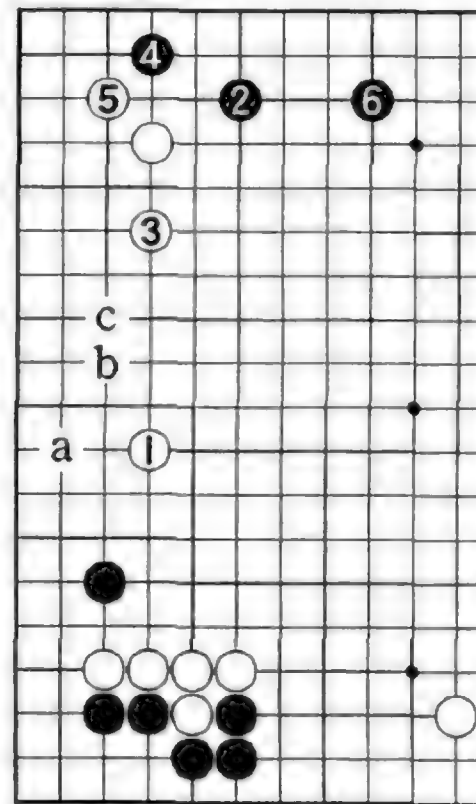
Figure 1 (1-29). A perfect capping move

The sequence to 18 is not one you see often. The result looks reasonable.

Choosing between 18 and the high pincer of 1 in *Dia. 1* is very troublesome. The weak point of 1 is that after the same continuation to 6 as in the game Black can aim at setting his stone in motion with 'a' or invading at 'b' or 'c'.

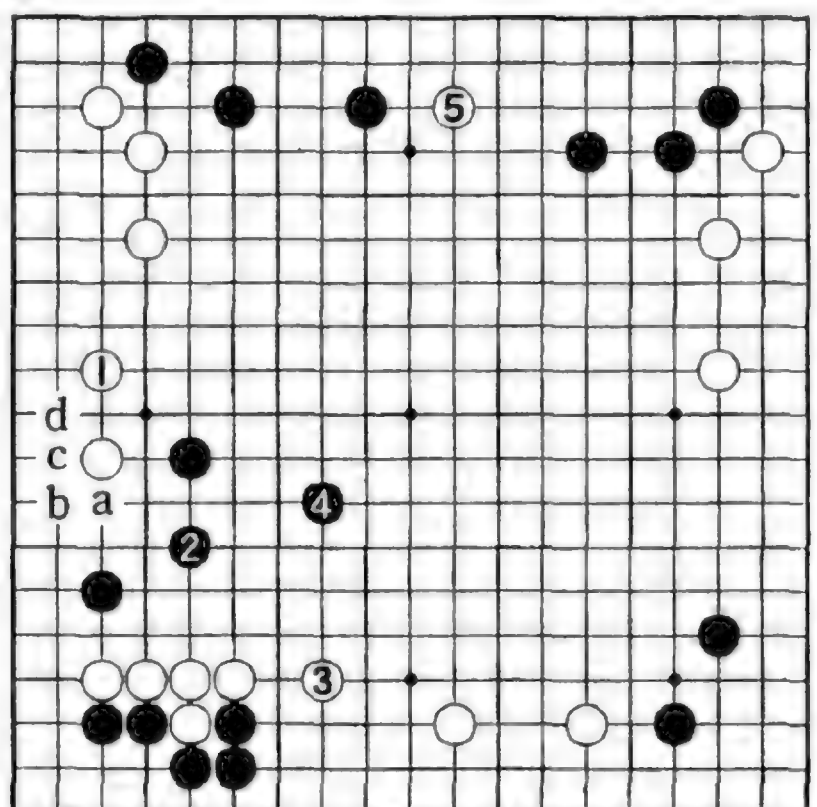
The choice depends on the player. My style

is to play the low pincer of 18 to stop Black from doing anything with his stone at 7. The drawback is that after we occupy the large points of the fuseki with 19 to 28 capping at 29 becomes the only move. Yet if White used 24 to jump to 29, Black would enclose the corner with 24, leaving White too biased towards his left-side moyo. White has no choice about 24.



Dia. 1: the high pincer

My answer to 29 led to my falling way behind in the fuseki. To state the conclusion first, I should have answered at 1 in *Dia. 2*. Black 2 is probable (Black 'a', White 'b', Black 'c', White 'd' would make Black too heavy). White 3 to 5 will follow. I considered this variation, but I didn't feel like playing 1 because it felt slack.

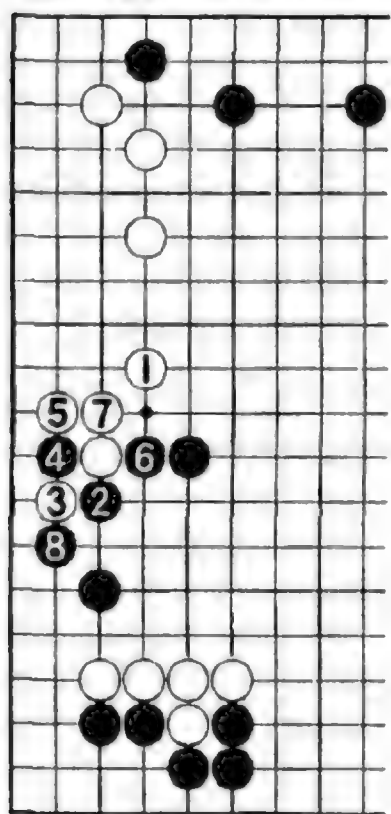


Dia. 2: correct for White

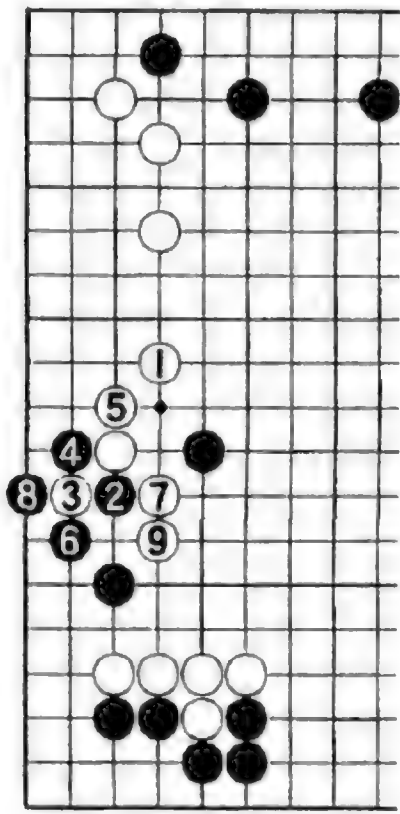
Note that if White plays at 1 in *Dia. 3*, the 2-4 combination works well to settle Black's group. White is forced to answer very submissively up to 7. If I did play 1 —

Dia. 4. I would pull back at 5. If Black 6, White cuts his way through with 7 and 9. However, Black will challenge him to a ko with 8 at 9, and this will be too much for White to handle. The ko is a very clever way of settling Black's group.

That's why we can say that *Dia. 2* is the right approach here.



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

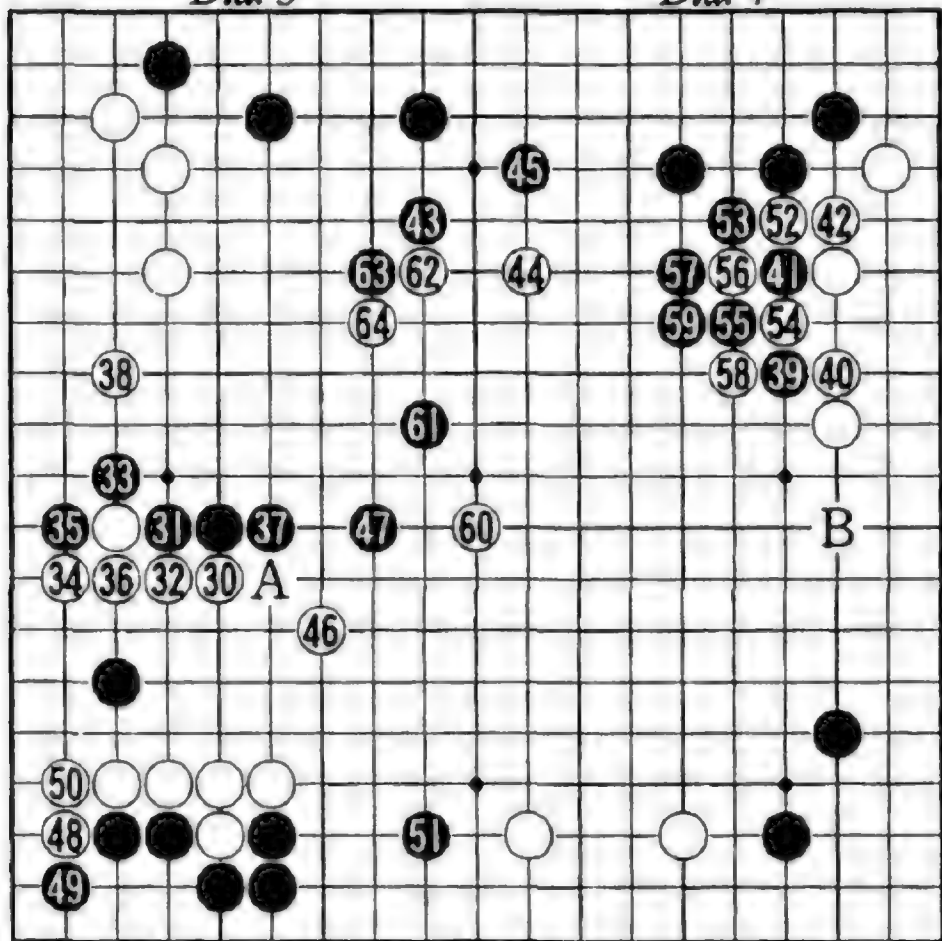


Figure 2 (30-64)

Figure 2 (30-64). Kobayashi's strength

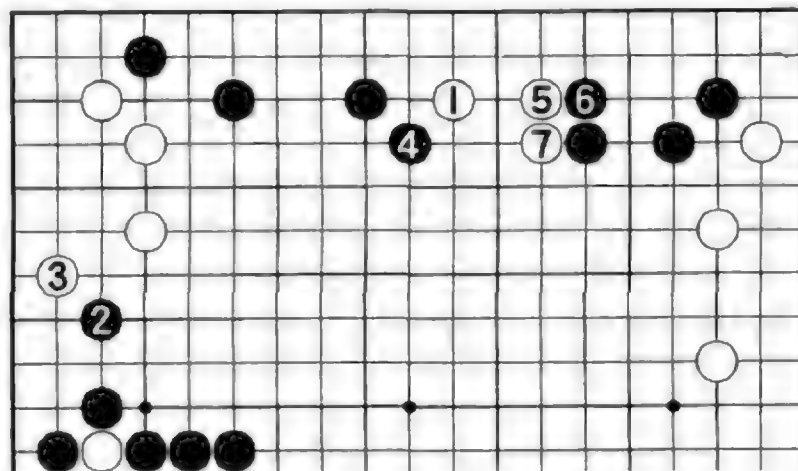
Attacking at 30 is awful. Trying to turn such a narrow area into white territory is wrong. Black's solid extension at 37 is magnificent. Extending to 38 now leads to my falling even further behind.

Turning at A with 39 would make White overconcentrated. However, Kobayashi makes the judgement that there is no possibility of extending to Black B, so he forces with 39 and

41, then jumps to 43. This shows the strength of the Kobayashi style.

Kobayashi's assessment of the overall position is: he has reduced the left side in sente, so he is doing well enough if he forces with 39 and 41, moves that normally lose points, then jumps to 43.

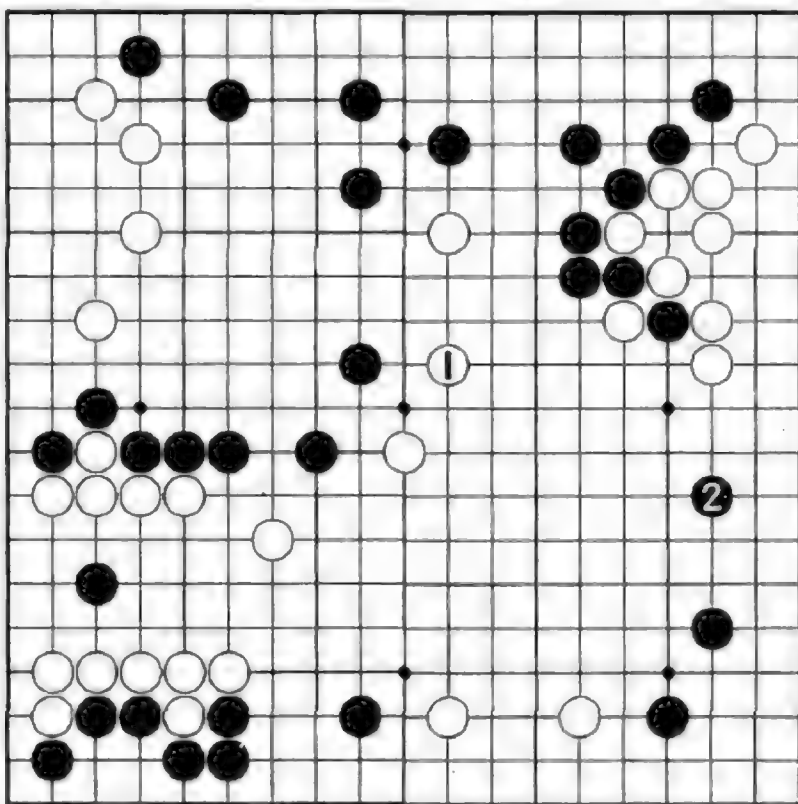
White was hurting. Consequently, I had no choice but to use 38 to invade at 1 in *Dia. 5*. Black will play 2, but White answers patiently at 3. Laying waste to the top is the best strategy.



Dia. 5: better for White

The way the game actually develops emphasizes the importance of Black's reduction of the left side. This is the beginning of a tough struggle for White.

White forces with 44, then takes territory with 46 and 48, but this is a painful development for him: jumping to 47 contributes to the potential black moyo at the top.



Dia. 6: losing without fighting

White goes for profit with 52 to 58. After first making Black thick, I start a fight with 62 and 64. These are do-or-die moves, but even so they feel a little unreasonable. Yet playing 62 at 1 in *Dia. 6* would lose without fighting, so what choice does White have?

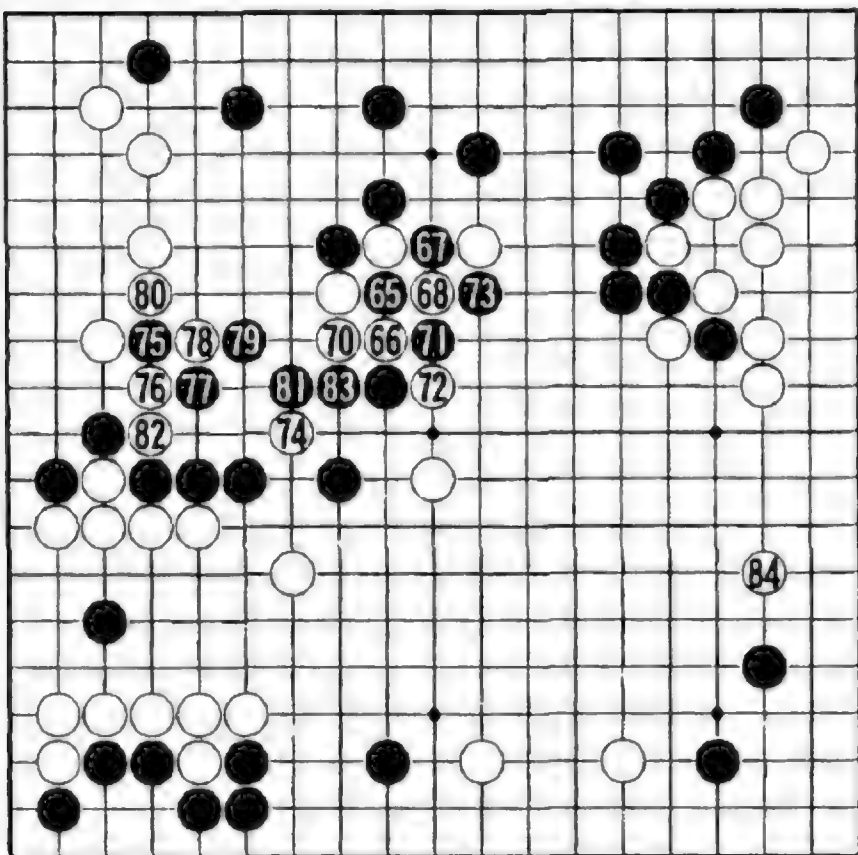
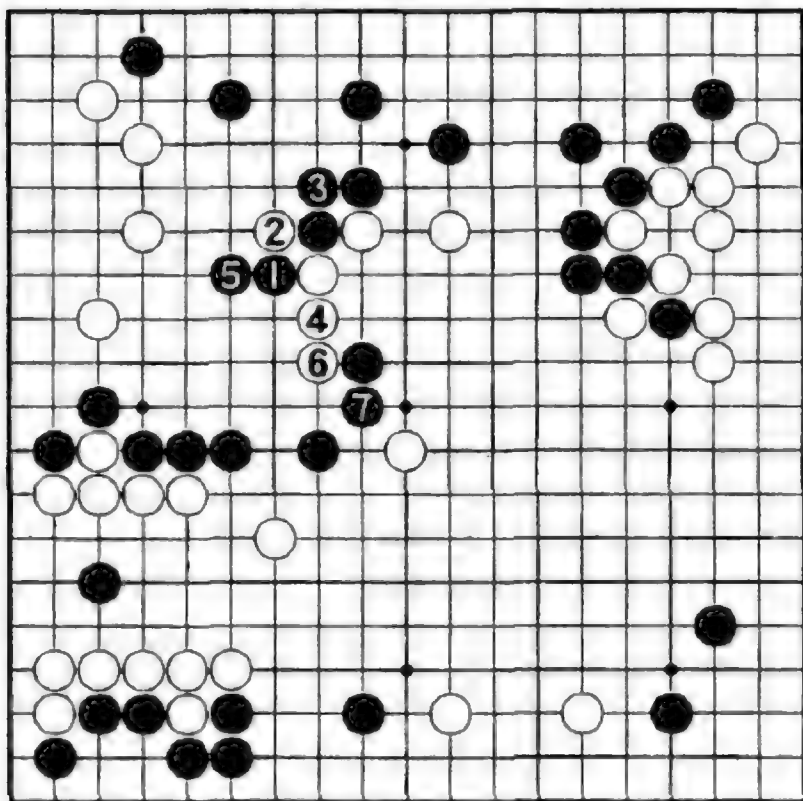


Figure 3 (65-84)
69: connects



Dia. 7: Black's first chance
Figure 3 (65-84). An even game?

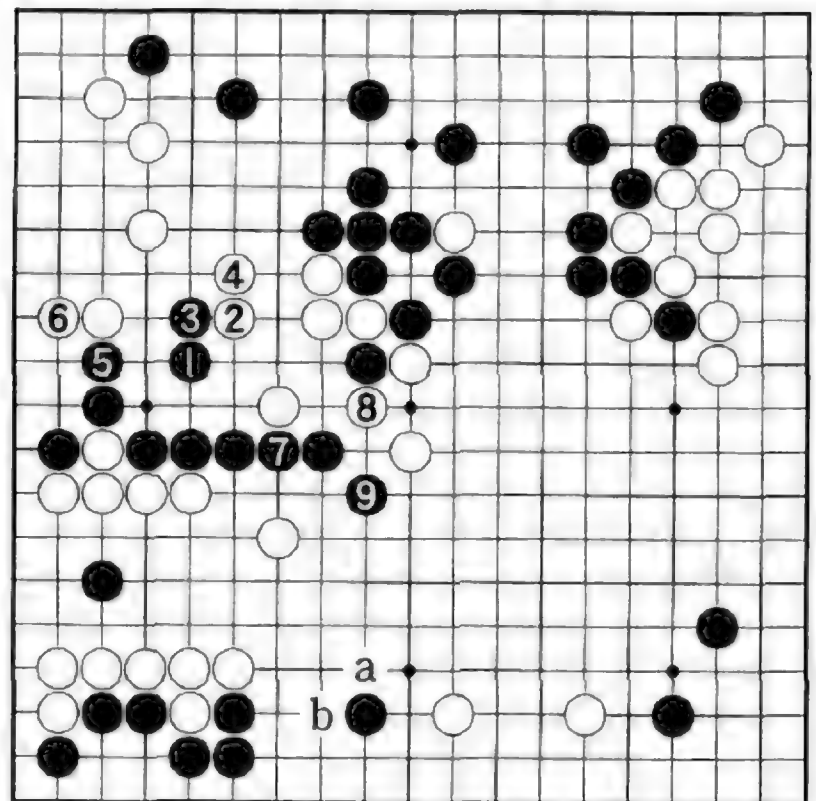
Capturing one stone at a time with 65 to 73 is good enough for Black. Yet when this happens one redeeming point for White is that his moves from 52 on in Figure 2 have become forcing moves; another is that he can complicate the game a little with the peep of 74.

Kobayashi's judgement was that taking territory up to 73 was good enough, that this way he could naturally stay ahead. Actually he was right, but in the course of the ten or so moves from 65 he had two chances to decide the game. First, instead of 65, how about trying the two-step hane of 1 in Dia. 7? White 2 and 4 are the only moves, but if Black plays aggressively with 5 and 7 White faces a tough fight.

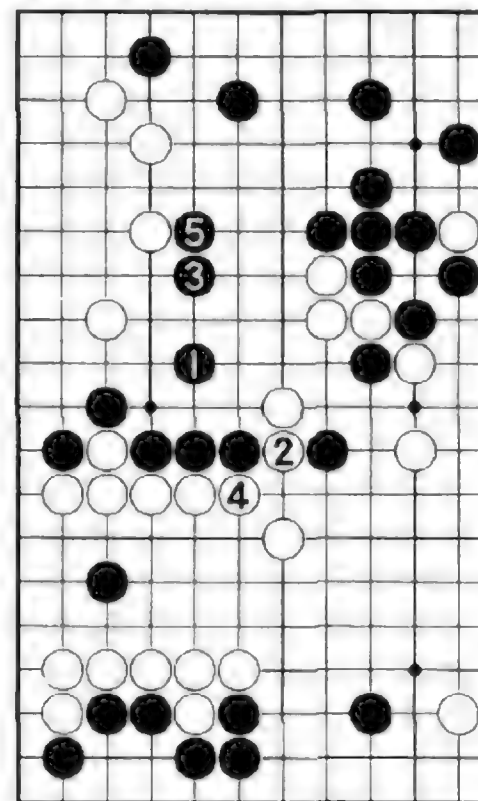
Again, Black 75 may be a standard techni-

que, but it is a compromise move. White 76 is the only move, so the continuation to 83 is inevitable. When White secures the left side with 82, then keeps sente to switch to 84, he has almost caught up.

Kobayashi's positional judgement, the belief that he could keep ahead by capturing the three centre stones, seems to have been a little slack. I think that 75 was too optimistic. If Black had known how close the game was, he surely wouldn't have compromised. Instead, he would probably have saved all his stones with 1 in Dia. 8. Actually, if he had done this, it would have been too much for White to handle. If he attacks with 2 and 4, Black makes an eye in sente with 3 and 5, then moves out with 9. White will next attack with 'a' or 'b', but this way he looks like losing. Therefore, White will probe at 'a' or 'b' before playing 2, but attacking the black group is incredibly difficult.



Dia. 8: another chance to decide the game



Dia. 9: bad for White

If instead White plays 2 in *Dia. 9*, Black escapes with 3 and 5. Either way, the result is a big contrast to the way White converts the left side into territory in the game. White would fall way behind in territory in these diagrams.

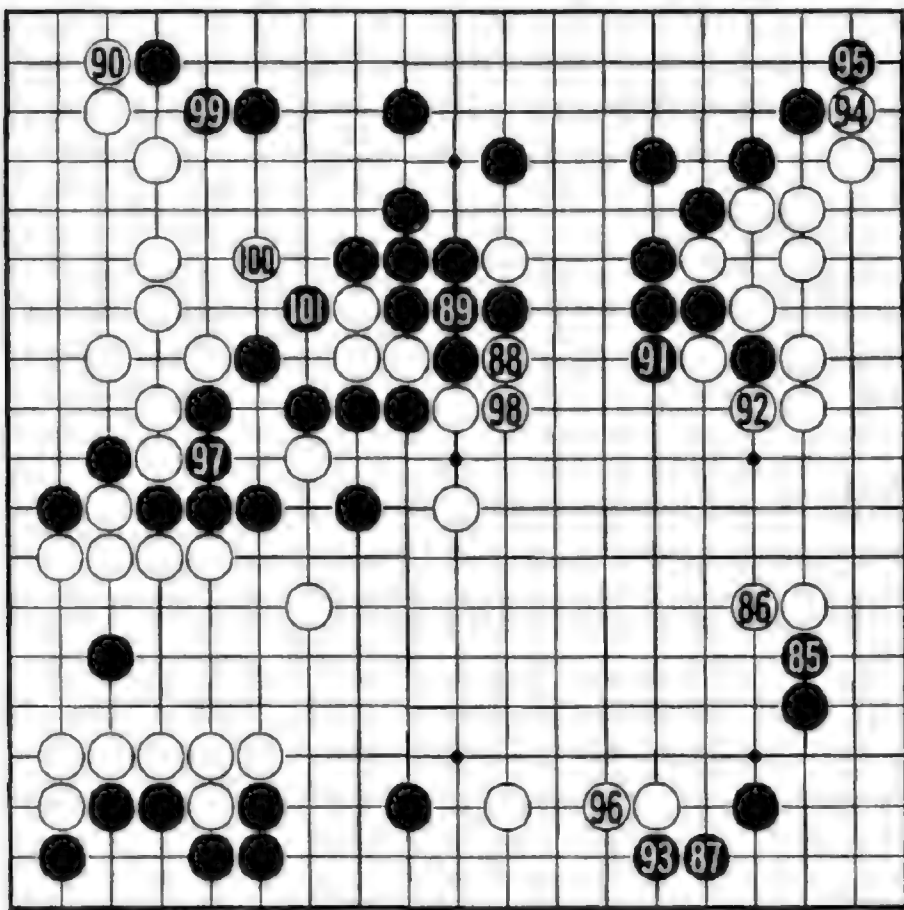
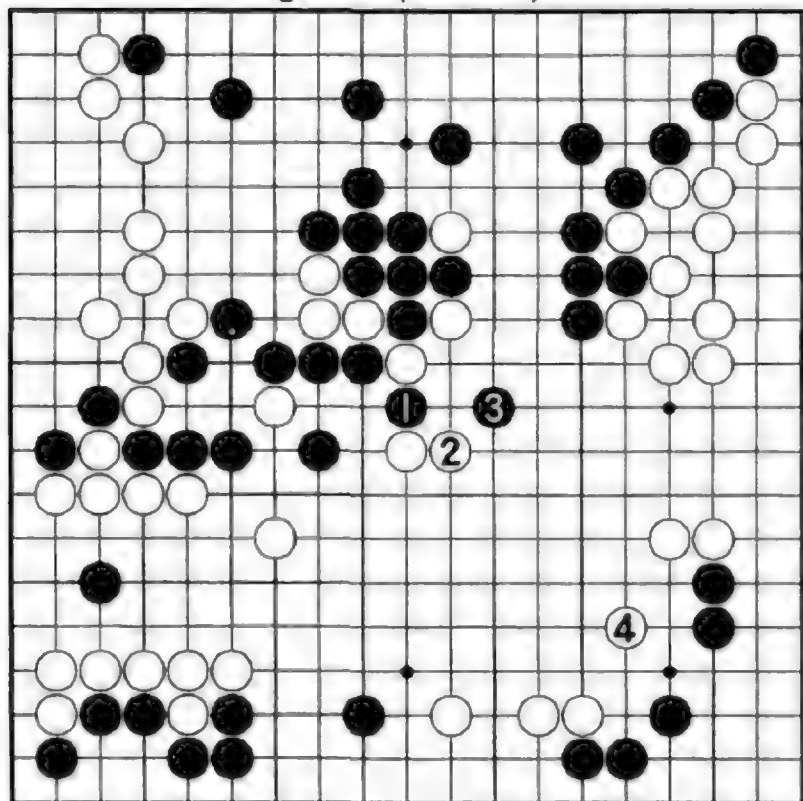


Figure 4 (85-101)



Dia. 10: issue undecided

Figure 4 (85-101). Differences in positional judgement

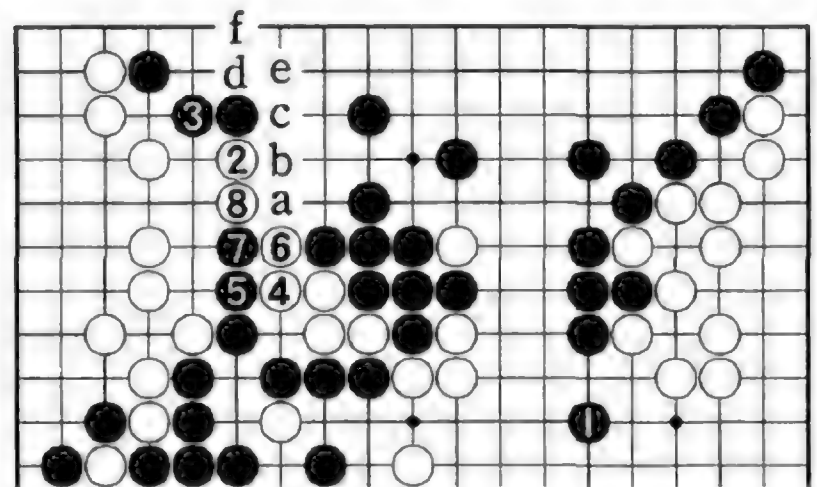
The actual position is even, but Kobayashi is acting on the assumption that he wins if he saves his left-side group. Playing simply and heading straight for victory is Kobayashi's strong point, but the other side of the coin is that it is also his weak point. By chance, in this game his strength turned out to be his weakness.

Black plays 85 and 87 because he is convinced he is ahead. You can't do anything in

the corner, this is enough, he's proclaiming. However, White, who believes he's finally made the game even, takes profit with 90 and waits for a chance to connect at 98.

Black 97 is the losing move. This move seems to have impressed Kobayashi as extremely big and thick, but at most it's worth three or four points, so at this stage of the game it's equivalent to passing for a move. The psychology of playing thickly when you're ahead so that you can walk away with the game has led Black into a blind alley. If instead Black had followed *Dia. 10*, the issue would still have been undecided.

Kobayashi seems to have underestimated the effectiveness of White 98. Once White plays here, Black can't omit 99. Black would like to jump out to 1 in *Dia. 11* instead, to stop White from getting a big centre, but then White would give him a jolt by attaching at 2. After 3 to 8, Black can't cut at 'a' because White 'b' works perfectly. Yet if Black plays 3 at 5, White wins the capturing race after White 'c', Black 'd', White 'e', Black 'b', White 'f'.



Dia. 11: White wins

That means that when White pulls out his four stones with 4, Black has no way of capturing them, so White's victory becomes certain.

45th Honinbo Prize Money

1st: ¥21,000,000

2nd: ¥4,200,000

Match fee. Title holder: ¥6,200,000

Challenger: ¥4,100,000

League fees. Winner: ¥720,000

Loser: ¥540,000

Third prelim. round: ¥310,000

Fees in the first and second prelim. rounds range from ¥58,000 for a shodan to ¥175,000 for a 9-dan.

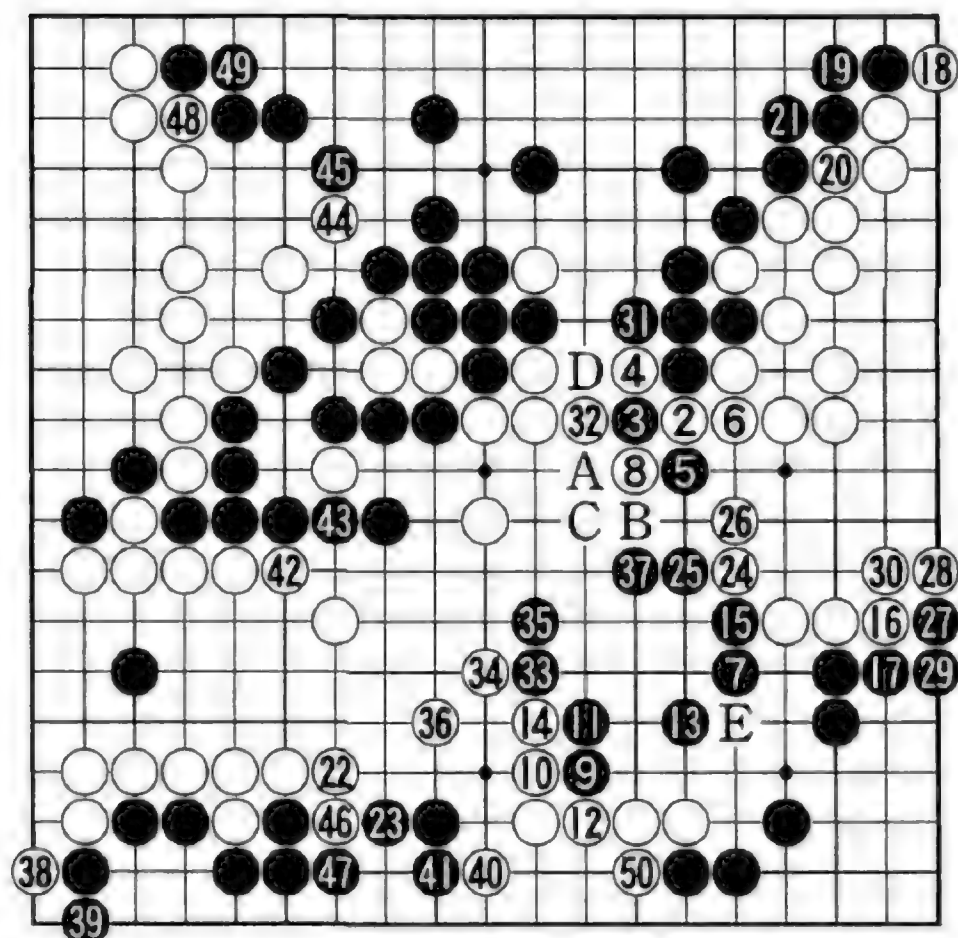


Figure 5 (102-150)

Figure 5 (102-150). Clinching the game

The combination of 2 and 4 is decisive (if White 4 at 8, Black 5, White 6, Black A, White B, Black C is frightening). If Black now plays D, White forces with White 8 and wins by a big margin when he seals off the bottom centre with E. That's why Black pokes his head into the centre with 7, but when White captures at 8 he has a small but irreversible lead.

The game continues for over a hundred moves after this, but Black is not given any chance to get back into the game.

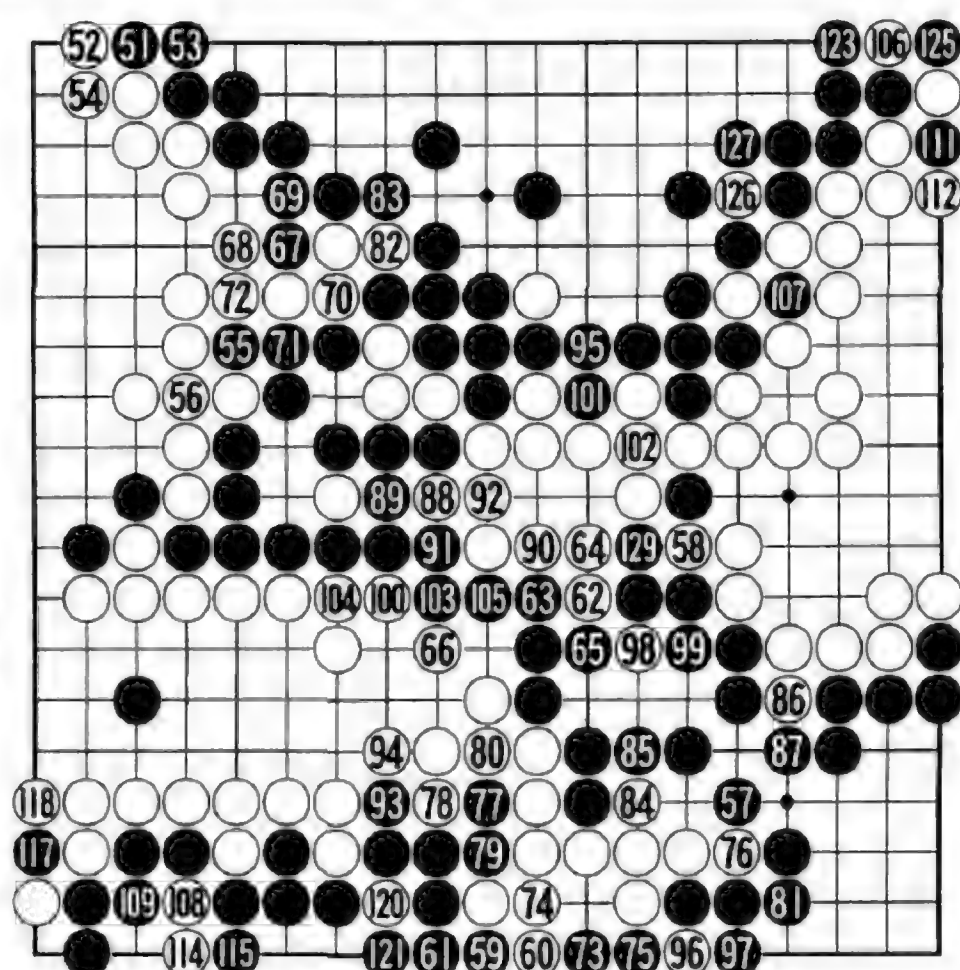


Figure 6 (151-230)

ko: 110, 113, 116, 119, 122; 124: connects at 107; 128: ko (at 106); 130: connects (at 111). White wins the final ko.

Figure 6 (151-230). A gift from the gods

Kobayashi may have lost this series, but I didn't put much pressure on him. However, I am going to make the most of this gift from the gods, so that next time I can play with more self-respect and be more of a threat.

White wins by 3 1/2 points.

(Kido, September 1990. Honinbo report translated by John Power)



The moment of victory: Cho shows yet again that he plays his best when his back is to the wall. For the second time he frustrated Kobayashi's ambition of taking the Honinbo title.

The 15th Meijin Title Match

The Kobayashi-Otake Rematch



A number of years ago Otake made the oft-quoted comment that for a go player happiness is being able to play in a best-of-seven match once a year. If so, then 1990 must be a year that Otake will remember, for he had this rare opportunity twice. A quick look at the records in the *Kido Yearbook* shows that of the 426 active go players at the Nihon Ki-in and Kansai Ki-in only 14 have played in a best-of-seven.

Otake's second big title match of the year was a rematch with the player who brushed off his challenge in the Kisei title match. Otake's failure to test Kobayashi more had been a blow to his fans, so his second challenge was a chance to make amends. Players and go reporters close to Otake were impressed with the strong determination and fighting spirit with which he was preparing for the Meijin title match. It was as if, at the age of 48, Otake was staking his career on making a comeback as Meijin. In the 1970's Otake had been known as 'the Meijin man' for the way he dominated the title. He was the 14th and last Yomiuri Meijin in 1975, the 1st Asahi Meijin in 1976, then he won the 3rd and 4th Meijin titles as well. That was the end of

his success, but even after losing to Cho Chikun in 1980, he was the challenger for three years in a row from 1982 to 1984. It was also an open secret among insiders that he was the favourite of the sponsors, as he had been one of the leading players to side with the Asahi in the dispute over the sponsorship of the title 15 years ago (Kobayashi had sided with the Yomiuri).

For all these reasons, Otake was expected to do much better than he did in the Kisei title match. When he started by winning the second and third games, the match became a very exciting one for the spectators — even in the series he loses (like his two Honinbo losses to Cho) Kobayashi always starts well, so suddenly he seemed vulnerable. As our commentaries will show, the chinks that had appeared in his positional judgement in the Honinbo title match (see the games given in this issue) were again apparent.

The turning point was the fourth game. Kobayashi made a mistake in a joseki, presenting Otake with an early lead, but he fought on tenaciously and caught up. That evened the series at 2-2, whereas Otake could have had a 3-1 lead. The difference is enormous. Then in the fifth game Kobayashi's positional judgement came good: he defied the conventional wisdom of go by giving Otake a ponnuki in the middle game. His boldness paid off and perhaps was the crucial factor in turning the series in his favour. He dominated the final game and so secured his third Meijin title in a row.

As with the Kisei match, this series was interesting for the contrast between the styles of the two players. Otake tries to use the whole board, that is, to keep the position as open as possible. Kobayashi tries to narrow the focus of the game, settling the shape in the local positions and eliminating the opponent's freedom of action. After four years of one-sided title matches, the clash between these two provided go fans with some enthralling entertainment.



As has become the custom recently, the first game of the title match was held overseas, this time in Frankfurt. Here Otake, Ishida (the referee) and Kobayashi join in a toast at a party held before the game.

Game One

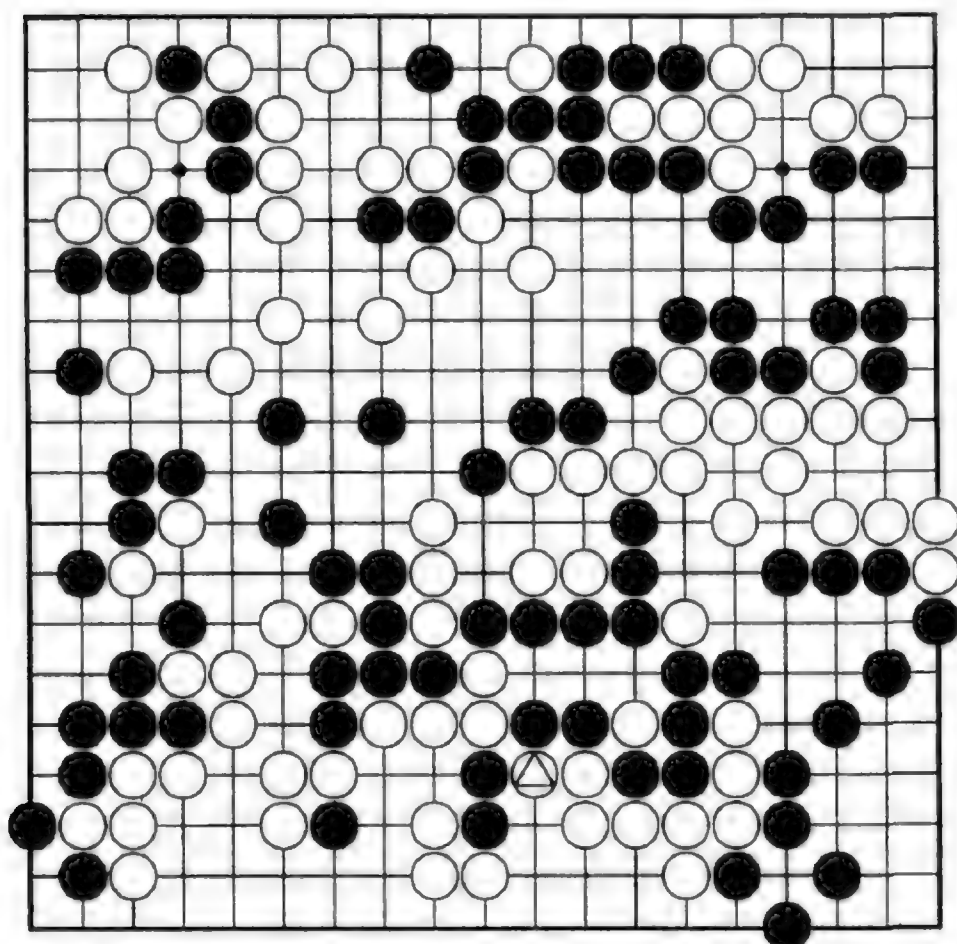
White: Kobayashi Koichi, Meijin

Black: Otake Hideo 9-dan

Komi: 5 1/2; time: 8 hours each.

Played in Frankfurt on 12, 13 September 1990.

Commentary by Rin Kaiho, Tengen.



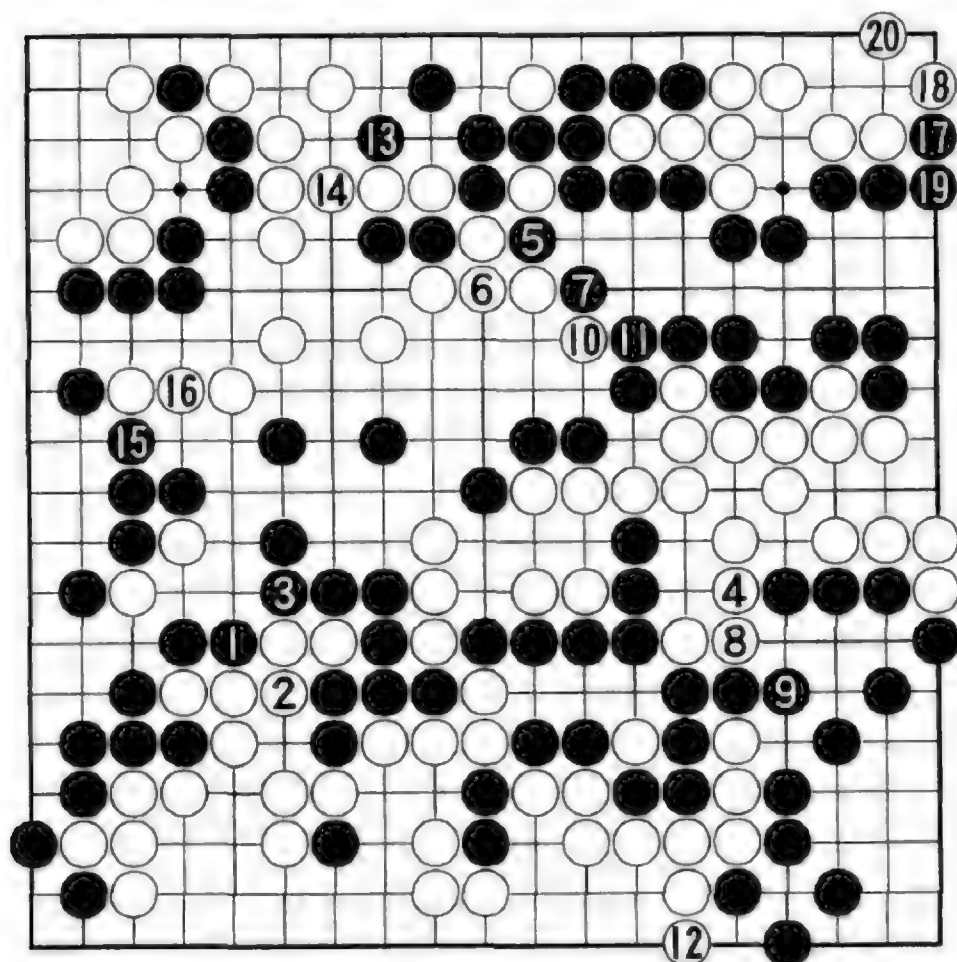
Dia. 1: a resignable game?

Dia. 1. The climactic move in this game came at 4:45 in the afternoon of the second day. White had just cut with the marked stone. Otake, playing black, resigned. The people following the game had been expecting a close finish. They were stunned, particularly Ishida Yoshio, the referee. According to Ishida's analysis Otake was losing by no more than half a point, if he was behind at all.

Stories of early resignation are legend. Otake resigned in a Meijin title game fifteen years ago against Ishida when he was only one point down. More recently, a young professional playing for the championship in his dan class in the Kisei tournament read out that he was half a point behind, saw no way to win, and manfully resigned. While riding the train home, however, he suddenly let out a yelp. He had miscalculated: he had been winning by half a point. The words 'I resign' had been his losing move. Later he had to endure a lecture from Rin Kaiho in which Rin told him that, 'It's ten years too soon for you to resign a half-pointer.'

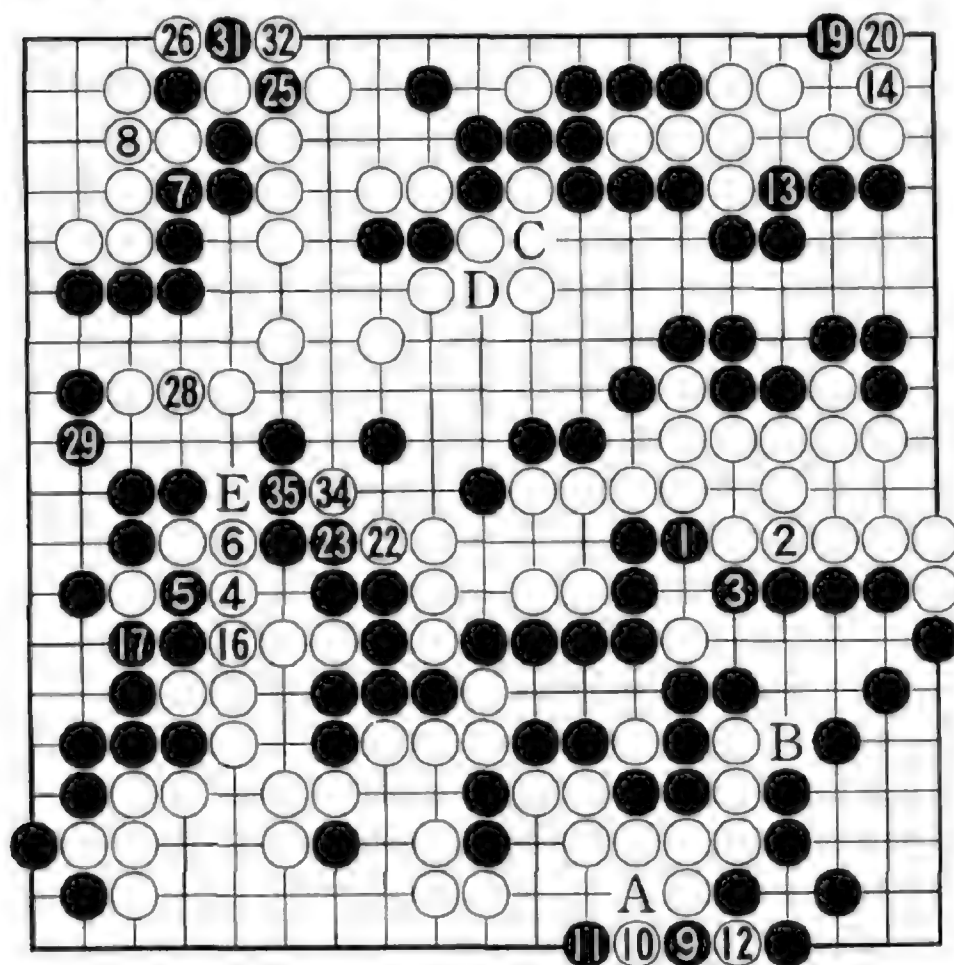
Rin on the Otake-Kobayashi game: 'I was watching the satellite broadcast when it ended. Since it was Otake who resigned, I as-

sumed he knew what he was doing, but now I'm not so certain.'



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. 'First let's try playing the endgame in the ordinary way. Black 1 and 3, White 4, and Black 5 and 7 are approximately equal. Black 1 and 3 have the largest numerical value by a slight amount, but the result of this diagram is clear-cut. Black has to give in to White 8 at 9, White gets the last big move at 12, and Black is 1 1/2 or 2 1/2 points behind. If this is the answer, I can agree with Black's resigning.'



Dia. 3

ko: 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36

Dia. 3. 'But there's a more interesting way to play. Black can start from the small end with 1 and 3 in Dia. 3, letting White have 4. Black also plays 7, before White can do so. Now Black's only chance is to start the ko at 11 on the bottom edge. Kobayashi said he was planning to connect at A, but then Black B is sente and right here we get a difference of two points. It's a half-point outcome for sure. Black may well win by half a point.'

'White therefore has to be stubborn and fight the ko. After White 36, Black's next ko threat isn't easy to find. There's Black C, but after White connects at D, White E becomes a ko threat. If Black makes a threat that costs him points in the top right, White will probably connect at A. So my conclusion is that Black has little chance of winning the ko fight or the game, but you can't tell what might actually have happened. The player who's ahead becomes nervous. Black's resigning was a mistake. It's embarrassing to win like this.'



Relaxing before the game.

15th Meijin Tournament Prize Money

1st: ¥24,000,000

2nd: ¥4,800,000

Title match fee. Title holder: ¥6,800,000

Challenger: ¥4,500,000

League fees. Winner: ¥800,000

Loser: ¥600,000

3rd prelim. round: ¥360,000

Fees in the 1st and 2nd prelim. rounds range from ¥59,000 for a shodan to ¥224,000 for a 9-dan.

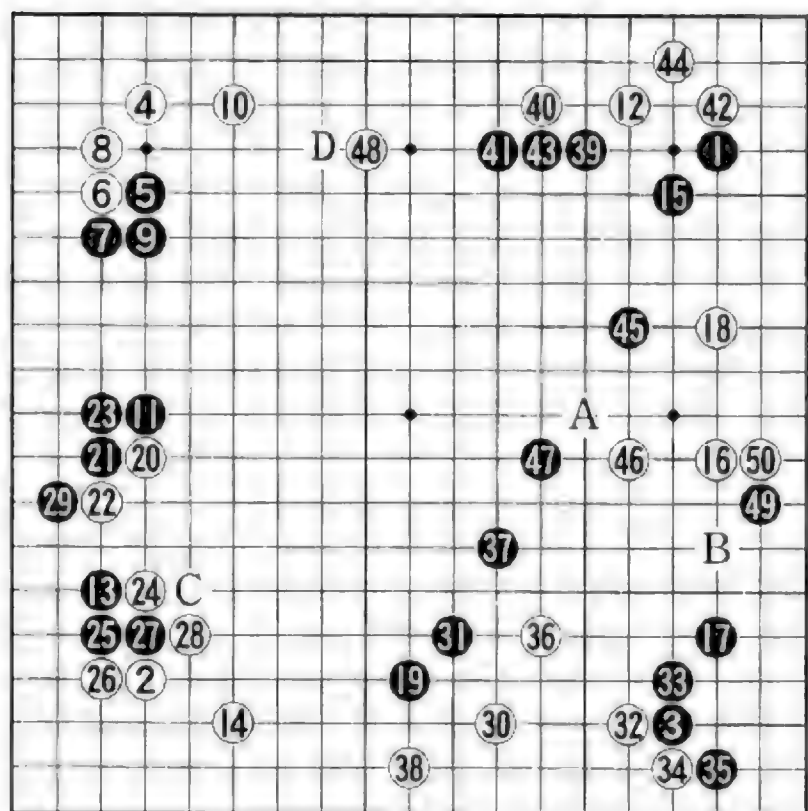


Figure 1 (1-50)

Figure 1 (1-50). Power against territory

In the opening both players played characteristically. Otake went for central power with moves like Black 39, 41, 45, and 47, while Kobayashi ran around the board taking territory. If anything can be criticized it is Black's passive play on the left side, and White 48.

Rin: 'I can't understand White 48. White has an excellent move at A. White B is attractive, too, anticipating a connection below 32. I'd also like to connect at C. And if White must play on the upper side, he should make a small-knight extension to D.' (Kobayashi agreed with this last comment.)

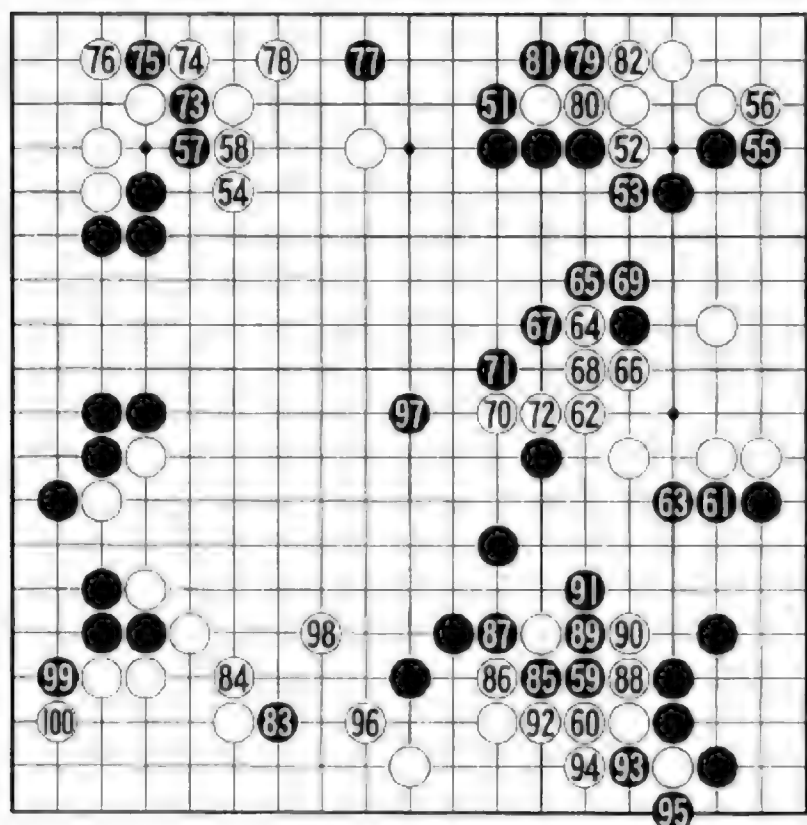
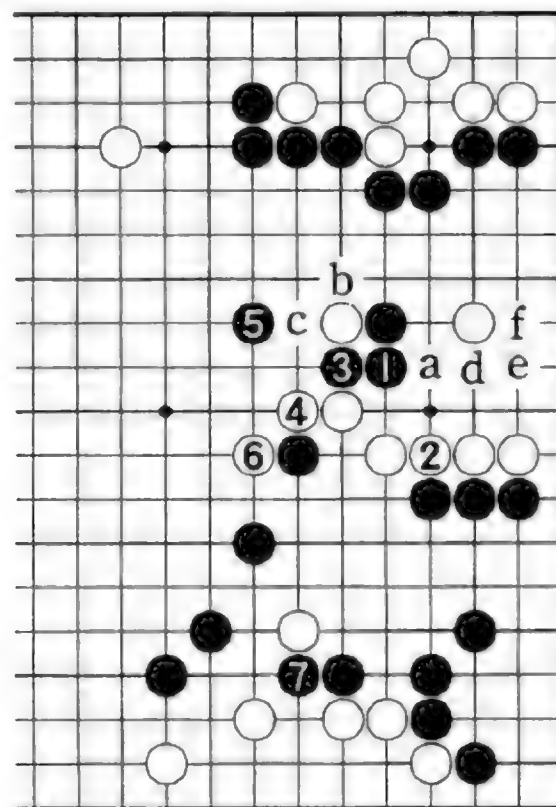


Figure 2 (51-100)

Figure 2 (51-100). The problem of White's right-side group

Otake continued his steady power build-up at 51, which forced White 54, then finally went on the attack at 61. But with Black 65 he failed to follow through.



Dia. 4

Dia. 4. Rin: 'Black should extend at 1 and keep up the pressure with 3 and 5. That gets him much more territory, and after 7 his attack is still going. Another possibility is Black 1 at 'a', followed by White 2, Black 'b', White 'c', Black 'd', White 'e', Black 'f'.'

Kobayashi quickly took the key point at 66. Annoyed with himself for missing this opportunity, Otake spent the next 30 moves trying to restore the balance of territory. When Kobayashi played 98, many of the spectators thought White had the game sewn up.

Rin: 'I disagree. I think Black 97 put the white group in extreme danger.'

Dia. 5. 'Instead of 1 in Figure 3 Black can make two forcing moves in the top right corner with 1 and 3, then pull back at 5 and let White try to live. That's harder than it looks. White 6 is the only move (White 6 at 'a', followed by Black 13, White 6, then Black 7, leads to euthanasia) but Black plays 7 to 15 and now it's just a textbook problem. White can't live.'

Dia. 6. 'White's not completely dead. He gets a ko with 1 to 5, but where are his ko threats? All he can do is to escape with 7 and 9 while Black takes profit with 8. With 10 Black's still attacking, and he's also winning on territory.'

Game Two

White: Otake Hideo

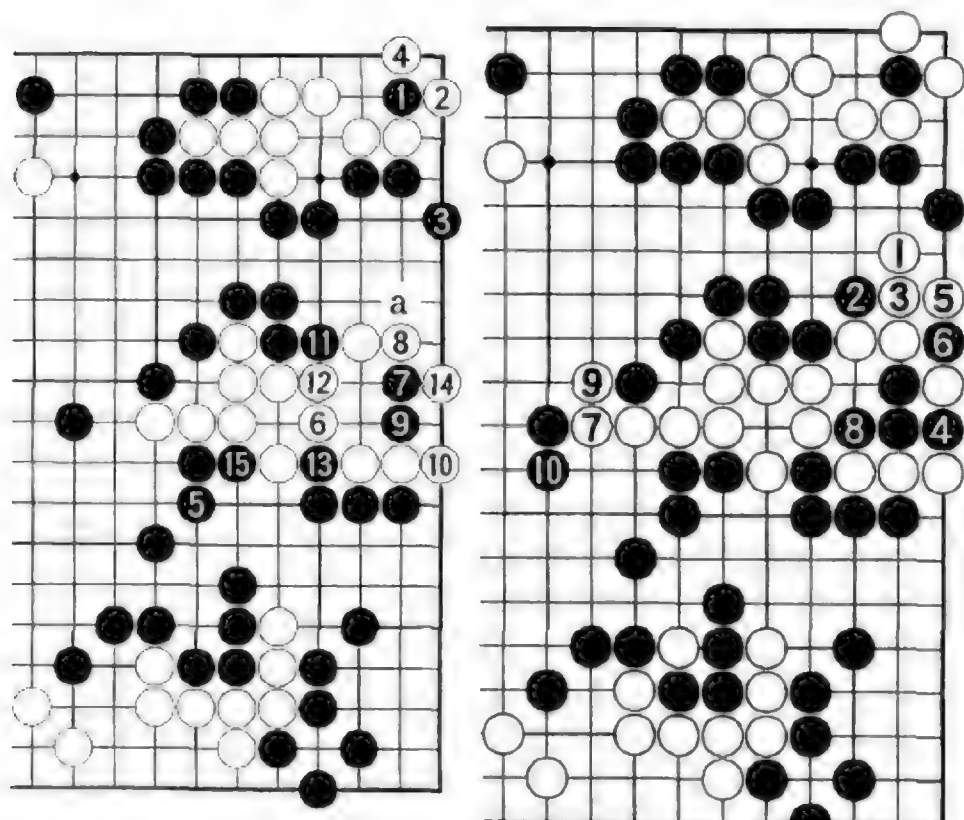
Black: Kobayashi Koichi

Played in Toyama City on 26, 27 September 1990.

Figure 1 (1–50). *Kobayashi style*

Black 11 is natural. If at A, White will press at 29, forcing Black into a low position.

When Otake plays the taisha move of 26, Kobayashi avoids the usual joseki (31 at 32), as White has the stone at 14 lying in wait — see *Dia. 1*. However, he doesn't follow the usual compromise joseki either. If Black 1 and 3 in *Dia. 2*, White gets a good position on the side, but Black's bottom position (between 1 here and 11 in the figure) is too wide and open.



Dia. 5

Dia. 6

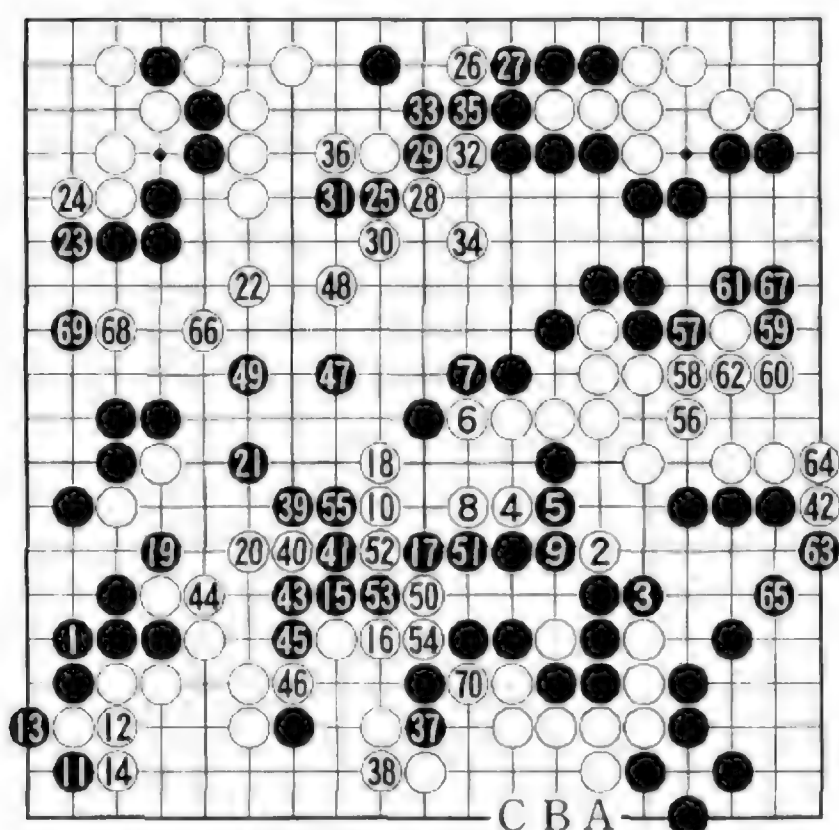


Figure 3 (101–170)

Figure 3 (101–170). White in the lead

When Black connected at 1 White alertly defended with 2 to 10, taking a clear lead. From here on the two players shared a common view of the game, favorable to White. But Kobayashi played overconfidently and gave away most of his lead. White 20 should have been 21, and White 24 should have been played in the center. If Otake had challenged Kobayashi with the ko at Black A, White B, Black C as in *Dia. 3*, instead of resigning, the game might have been decided by half a point.

Black resigns after White 170.

(Kido, Nov. 1990. Translated by James Davies.)

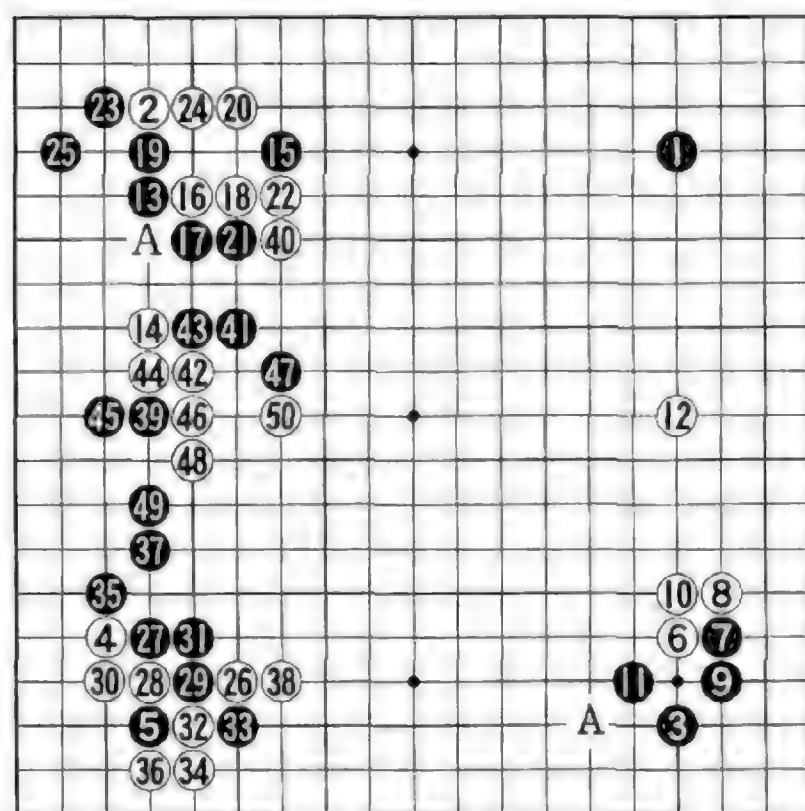
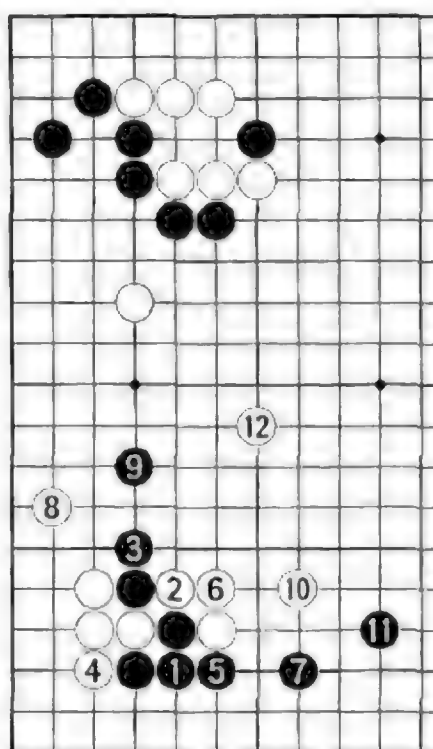
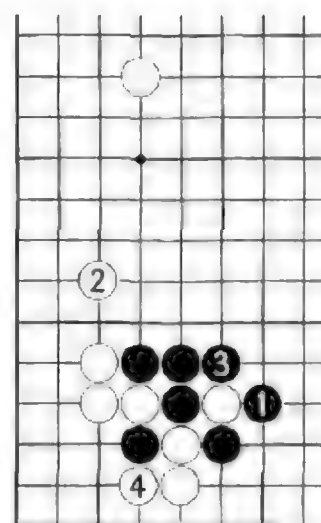


Figure 1 (1–50)



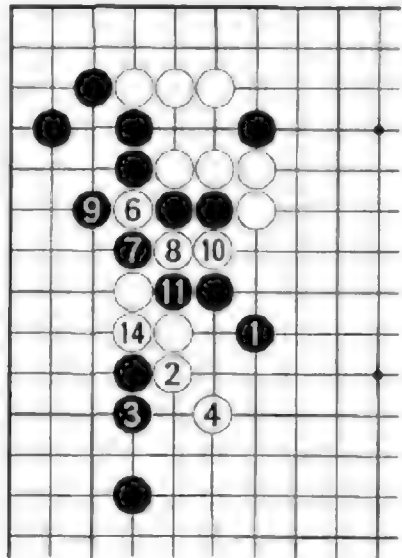
Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Note the forcing move of 40: playing this before escaping with 42 is important.

Black 43 and 45 look a little clumsy, but Black wants to eliminate the threat of the cut in *Dia. 3* if he simply plays at 1 there. After exchanging 2 for 3, White can aim at splitting Black into two with the sequence from 6 later on.



Dia. 3

5: elsewhere 12: takes; 13 retakes

Black 43 and 45 are an example of what is known as Kobayashi's 'kimeuchi' or settling the shape. Some players might be reluctant to settle the shape so early, but Kobayashi likes to simplify, especially if he can eliminate future worries.

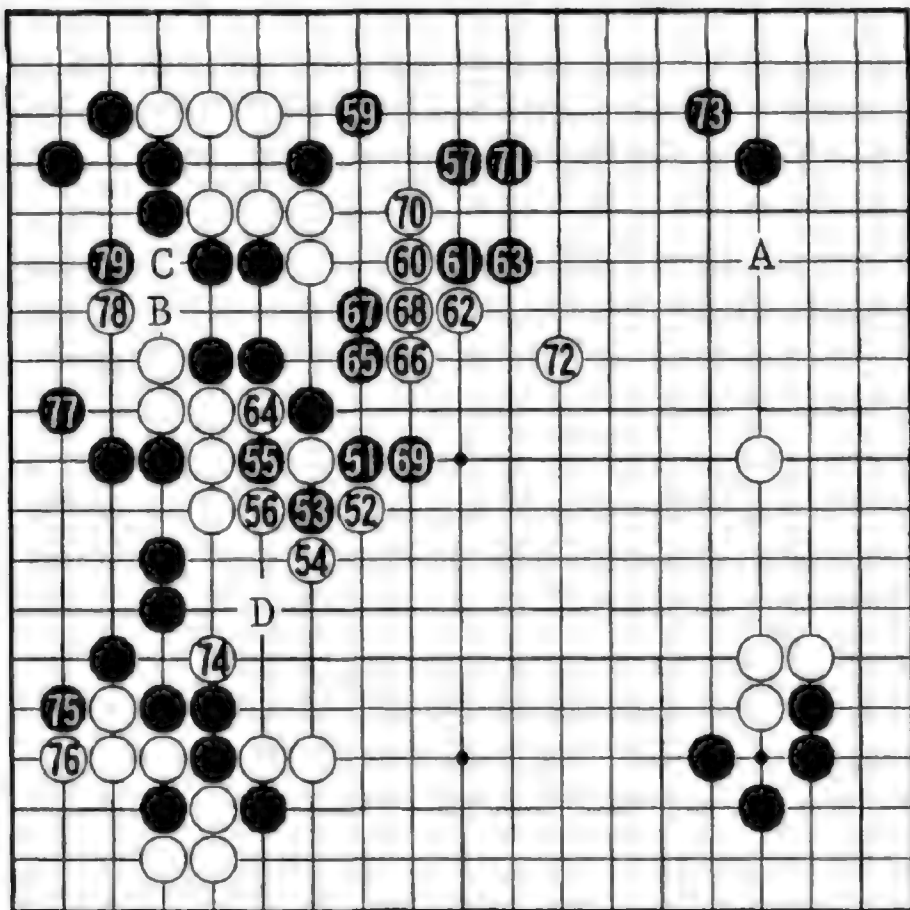


Figure 2 (51-79) 58: ko

Figure 2 (51-79). A clever contact play

The sacrifice to 56 is a standard technique for moving out quickly.

When Otake ignores 57, an interesting sequence follows, with Black taking compensation at the top for his loss in the centre. Note that 66 is good shape, as it sets up the knight's move at 72.

Black 73 looks tight, but if Black is greedy, playing at A, White has a troublesome invasion diagonally below 73.

White 74 is a very clever move. Since Black doesn't connect, it sets up a large capture for later. If Black uses 75 to defend against 74, White will exchange B for Black C, then take away Black's eye shape with White 77. Black wouldn't die, as he would be able to move out (he would start by pressing at D), but White would get various sente moves in the centre and perhaps take profit there, so Black prefers not to save his three stones.

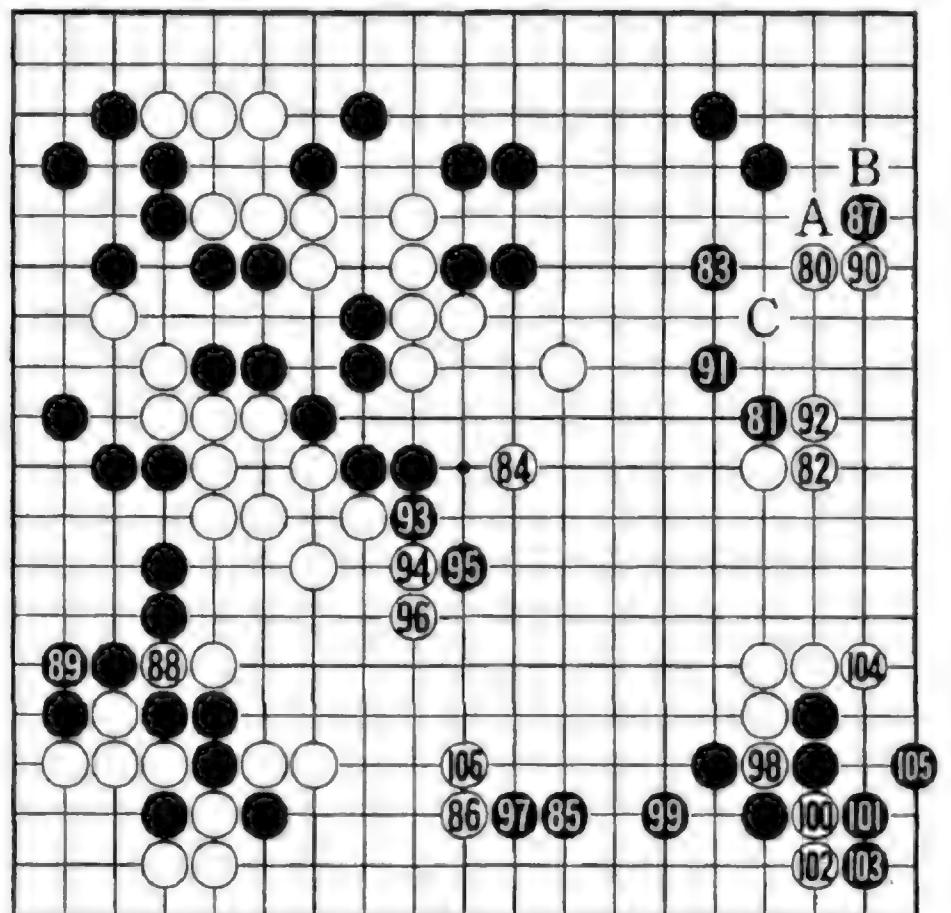
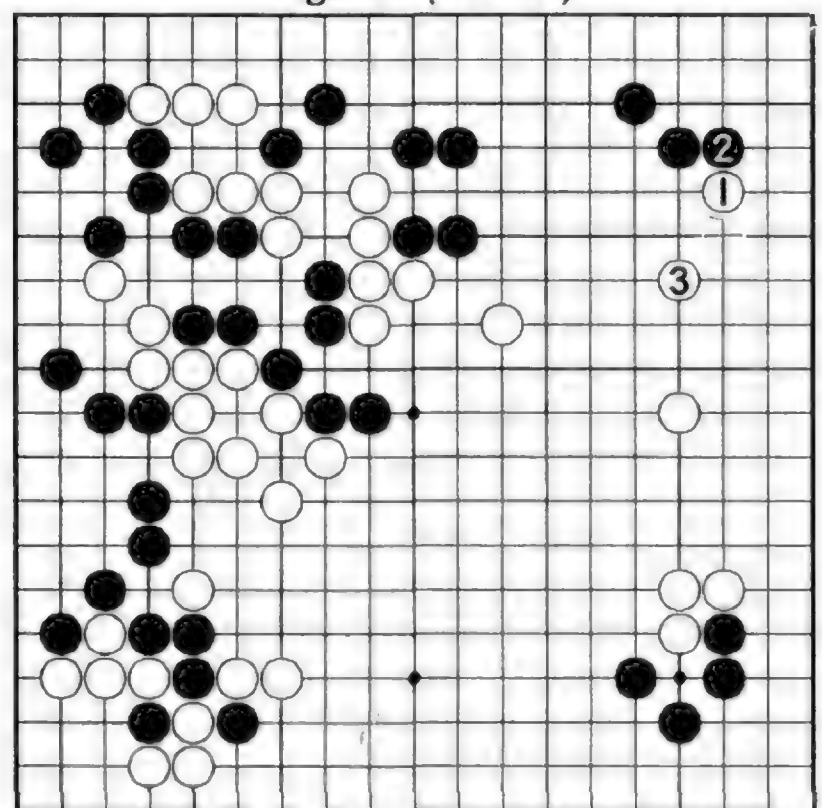


Figure 3 (80-106)



Dia. 4

Figure 3 (80-106). Otake's patience

Otake regretted White 80. It's slack because it gives Black a good attacking move at 81. With the burden of his weak group in the centre, White can't afford to start a fight here,



Otake plays a move (probably 32). Watching intently is Iwata Tatsuaki, the referee (centre).

so he has to answer patiently at 82. Otake wished he'd played 1 and 3 in *Dia. 4*.

White 82. The sealed move. Otake says that he was feeling quite upset over his mistake with 80 when he made it.

White 84. A reinforcement in the centre seems necessary.

Kobayashi was probably satisfied with his game when he got to play 85 at the bottom. White 86 in reply seems a little submissive: it is Otake's third patient move in a row. His patience is the feature of his play in this game and it is what enabled him to pull ahead in the latter half.

White 90. Better to play A, Black B, White C.

Black 91 shows that Kobayashi was satisfied with his position. If he thought he were behind, he would block at 92, in which case White's counterattack one space above 91 would start a difficult fight. Otake commented that he might have lost if Kobayashi had played 92. After 92, Otake believed that the game was a half-pointer, but with White possibly having the edge.

Figure 4 (107–144). Otake's endgame tesuji

When White plays 22, Black would prefer death to linking submissively below 22, so jumping out to 23 is natural, but White has a superb follow-up with 24. This moves makes good use of the aji of the sacrifice stones to the right.

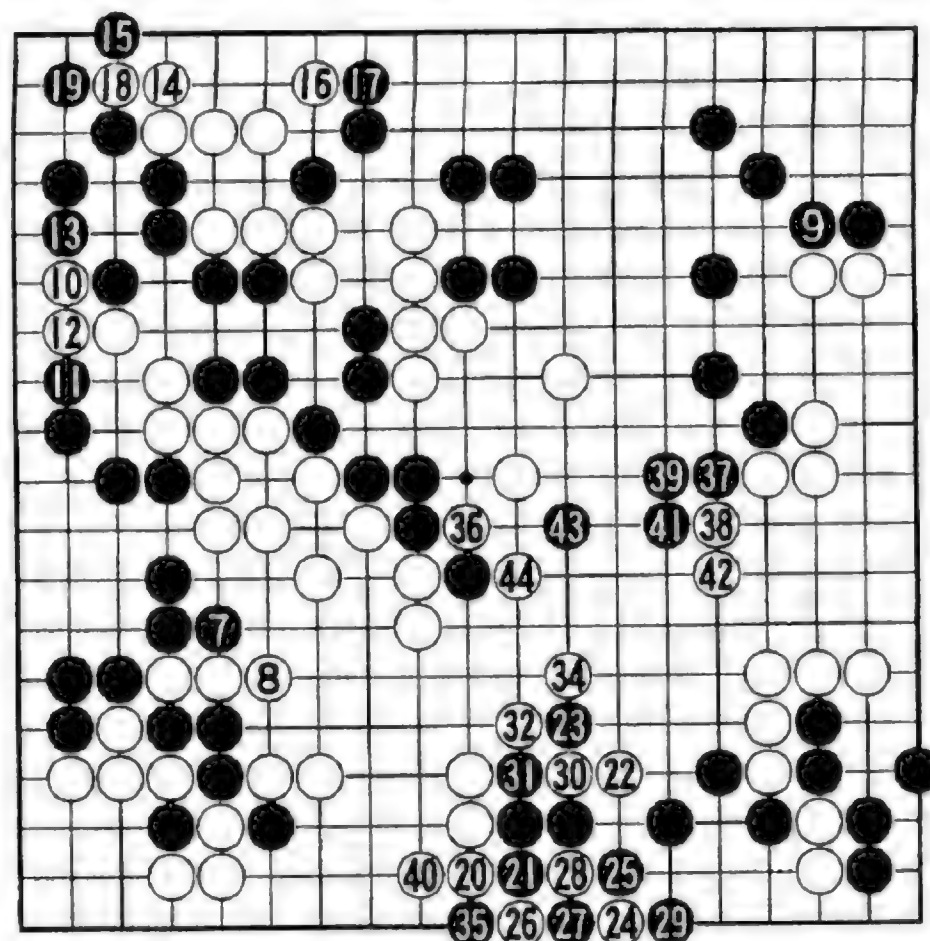
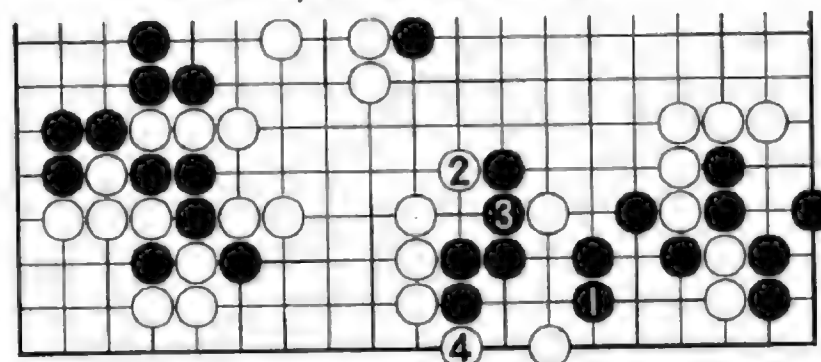


Figure 4 (107–144)
33: captures two stones



Dia. 5

Black goes wrong with his answer: 25 lets White cut off the centre stone with 30 and 32. Kobayashi commented that Black should have played at 1 in *Dia. 5*, which Otake planned to answer with 2 and 4. This way it would have been a half-pointer, though favourable for

White.

Black takes some points on the edge, but the game is decided when White plays 34 and 36.

Figure 5 (145–216). The game turns into a comfortable win.

From Figure 3 on Otake had been convinced that he had the edge in what he instinctively knew was a half-pointer, but he had felt perplexed as to how to convert his centre thickness into territory. It was because he didn't know what to do in the centre that he switched his attention to the side and the tesuji placement in Figure 4. Kobayashi's slip solved all his problems by putting him comfortably ahead.

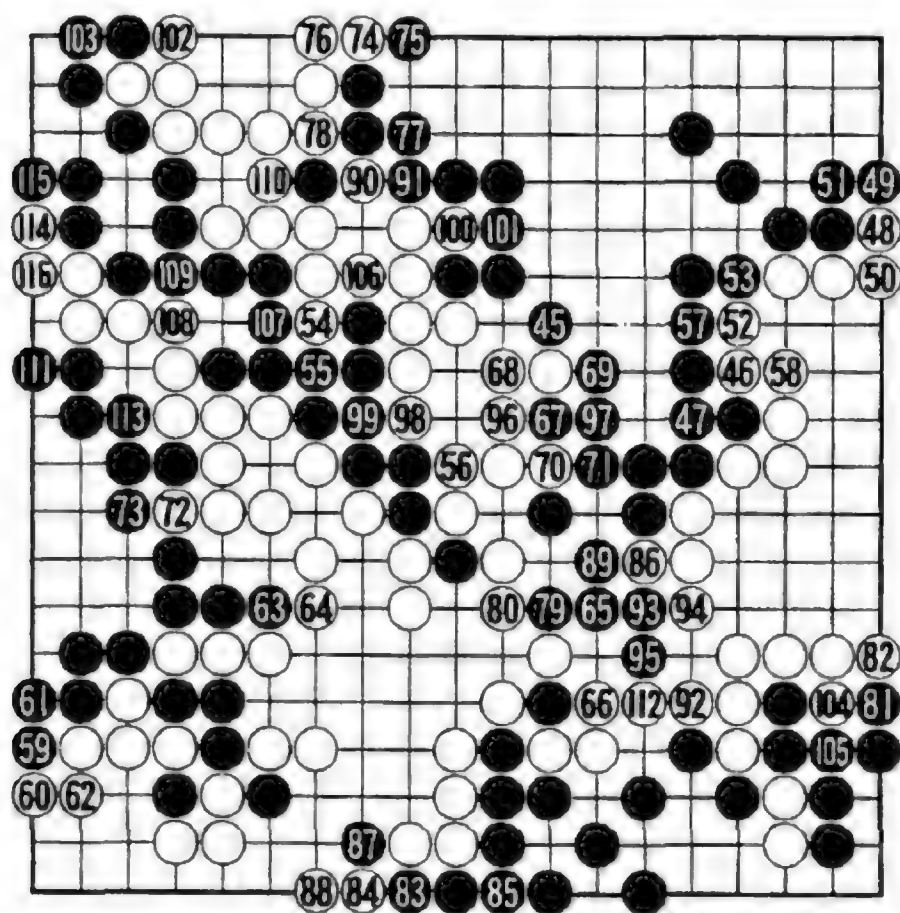


Figure 5 (145–216)

Otake had his regrets about 80 in Figure 3 and some other moves, but all in all this was a very good game for him. He played patiently when patience was required, but acted positively when it was necessary. Perhaps the game can be considered a victory for Otake's thickness over Kobayashi's *kimeuchi*.

White wins by 2 1/2 points.

(Adapted from the Asahi.)

Game Three

White: Kobayashi Koichi

Black: Otake Hideo

Played in Asahikawa City on 3, 4 October 1990.

Commentary by Kudo Norio 9-dan.

This is a very exciting and eventful game, with some extraordinary *furikawaris* (trades) taking place. The weather before the game was an omen. The Asahi Newspaper provided its private jet to fly the title holder and the challenger and the Asahi group up to Asahikawa, which is Kobayashi's birthplace. Over Hokkaido they ran into a thunderstorm which violently rocked the plane. When they landed, they found that the rain had turned into hail. With a pale face, Kobayashi said: 'I was frightened. I thought it was all over — my knees were shaking. I was stupidly wondering what would happen to the Meijin title if the plane went down.' Perhaps the stormy flight up influenced the play in this game.

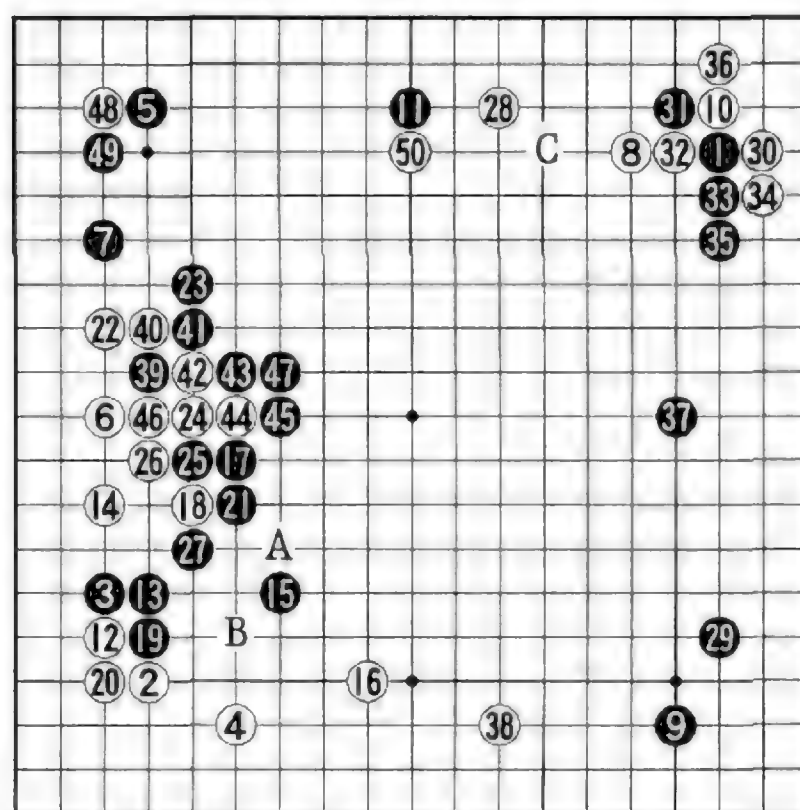


Figure 1 (1–50)

Figure 1 (1–50). Otake satisfied with his *fuseki*

Black 3 is an interesting move. Making an approach move with one's second move is a little unusual, but perhaps Otake wanted to make Kobayashi think. The latter usually plays the opening very quickly, following favourite *fuseki* patterns he's worked out, but Otake is said to dislike having the opponent play too quickly: it's no compliment to his own *fuseki*.

If the aim was to make Kobayashi slow up, it worked. He did play 4 immediately, but when Black switched to 5, he took 28 minutes over his next move.

Black 11. Black could have to the right of 10, but the *joseki* would see White extending along the top, which Black doesn't want. Otake: 'Black wants to make the strength of

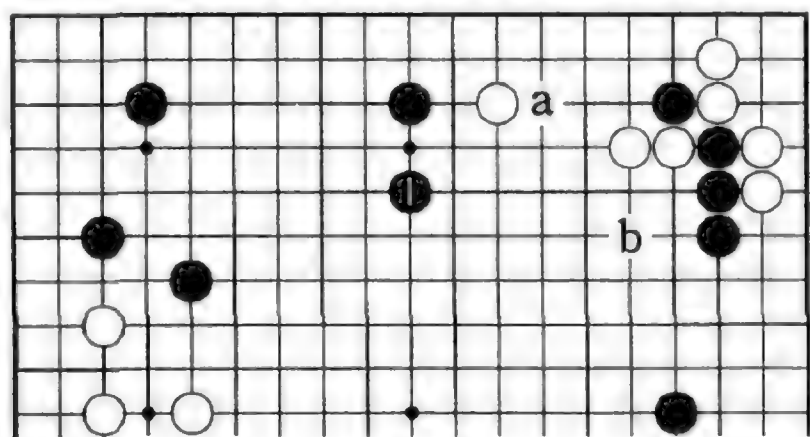
the large-knight enclosure the centre of the game.'

White 14 is the distinctive Kobayashi style. Since 15 and 16 are a natural continuation, 14 lets Black attack from the centre with 17. Kudo: 'This is an example of Kobayashi's profit-oriented style. Letting the opponent play in the centre doesn't worry him. He secures a base while taking away Black's eye shape. Players who place importance on the centre, like Otake and Takemiya, would probably jump out with 14 at 24, Black A, White 45.'

White 18 looks severe, but Black has the forcing move of 19 to maintain his connection. If White 22 at 27, Black answers at B.

Otake was satisfied when he built thickness with 25 and 27. His stone 11 at the top is now in a good position.

White 28. Otake: 'With Kobayashi as my opponent, I couldn't believe that I was being allowed to make a second corner enclosure. If White had played 28 at 29, I planned to attack at C. That would also be reasonable for Black.'



Dia. 1

Black 39 starts the middle game. Otake also considered jumping to 1 in *Dia. 1*, which sets up good moves at 'a' and 'b', but 'settling the shape with 39 suits my style. When Black builds the wall to 47, this is a hard game to lose. None of Black's stones has lost efficiency, he's far superior in thickness, and he's hardly behind in territory either.'

It's hard for White to invade at the top now, so he creates some aji with 48, then tries to reduce the moyo with 50.

Figure 2 (51-100). 'Unbelievable play'

White 60 is a bold move, though Kobayashi commented later that it was an overplay and that he should simply have defended at A. However, this is the move that makes this game unusual and interesting.

Black 63 and 65 indirectly defend the weak point at 100.

Black 65. Why doesn't Black block at 66? Kudo: 'If Black 66, White plays B, Black 65, White 92. Flattening out White's position looks big, but the minus from giving White the monkey jump at C is considerable, besides which the forcing stones get even heavier. Black 65 is the correct way to play.'

Black goes for territory at the top with 67. His atari of 75 may look surprising, but he had already decided to let White capture his wall when he cut at 67. Normally one would expect Black to play at 1 in *Dia. 2*. If White 'a', Black plays 3 and is satisfied, but White 2 is more severe. The result to 8 would be satisfactory for White.

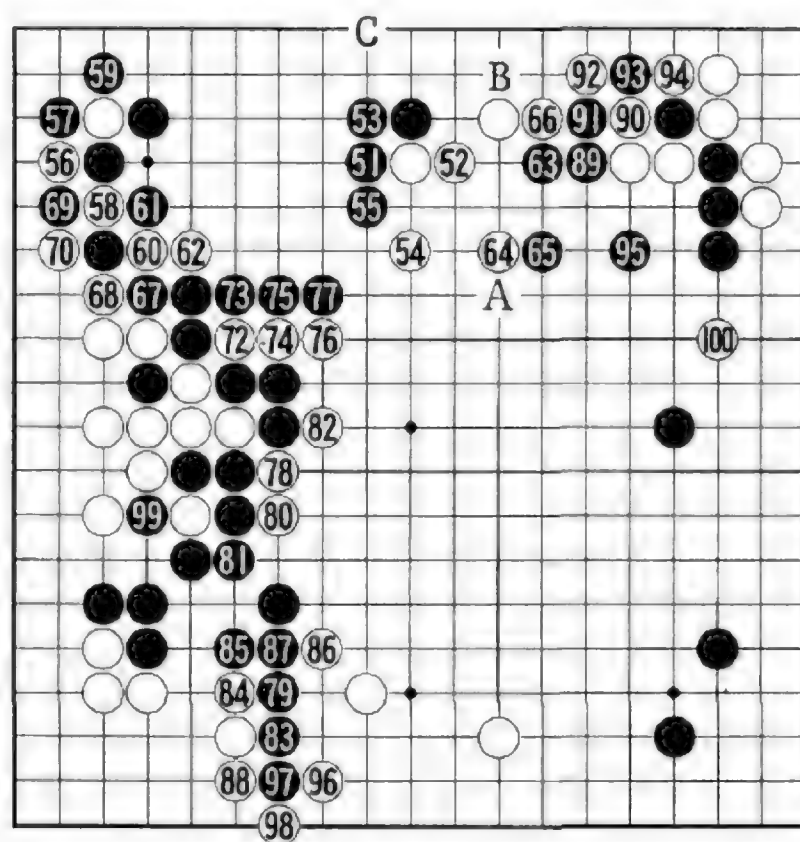
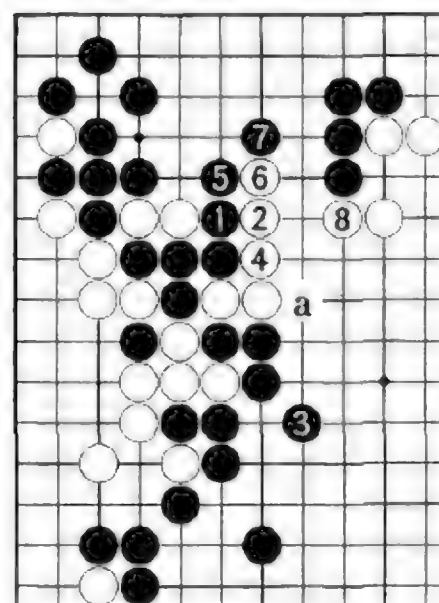


Figure 2 (51-100)
71: connects



Dia. 2

When White cuts at 78, Black can hardly try to save his three stones, considering the weakness of his group below.

The shift in the position was so dramatic that players following the game thought that there had been an upset. That was the opinion

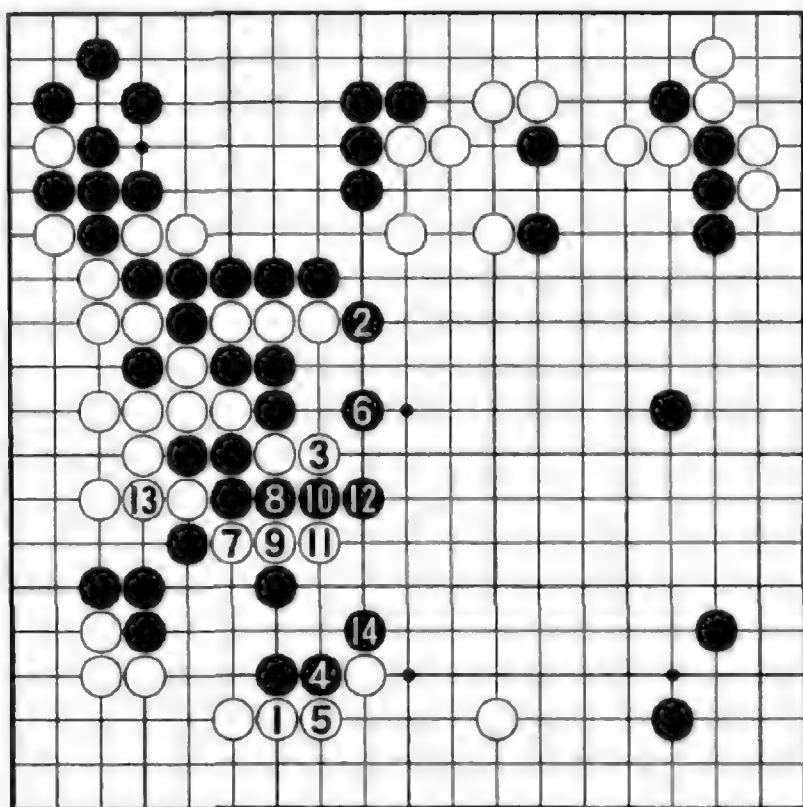
of Kudo, while O Meien, who was giving a live commentary on satellite TV, exclaimed: 'Otake's play is unbelievable.'

However, Otake knew what he was doing. 'The position has not changed. White has lost nearly ten points where he made the hane (60). White also loses ten points in gote at the bottom from 83 to 88. The way Black loses his centre stones is terrible, but if you consider that his loss is worth about 20 points in thickness, then the books balance.'

Kobayashi agreed with Otake's analysis. It's surprising how often violent fluctuations in a top-level game fail to change the territorial balance.

The question remains of whether Kobayashi could have answered Black's probe of 79. Otake's opinion was that he couldn't afford to. He gave the sequence in *Dia. 3*. White's only hope is the cut at 7, but it doesn't lead anywhere.

Keeping sente means that Black can switch to 89, which has been his aim ever since he played the two forcing moves there. If White had got sente to jump down to 95, they would have turned into bad moves.



Dia. 3

Figure 3 (101-133). Another *furikawari*

Black 1. The sealed move. Otake: 'This was the most painful part of the game. I was confident that whatever happened I could win by one and a half points or half a point. But however long I thought I couldn't reach a conclusion as to which variation I should follow.'

Instead of 1, attaching at A also looks good. Black could also play 5 at A.

White 10. This is a difficult point for White.

If he pushes down at B, Black will be happy to jump to C. According to Otake, he thought that White was on the spot, but 10 was the one move he hadn't read out.

A ko follows. Apparently White can't afford to answer Black's ko threat at 19, so the previous *furikawari* is undone with 21. Black is satisfied.

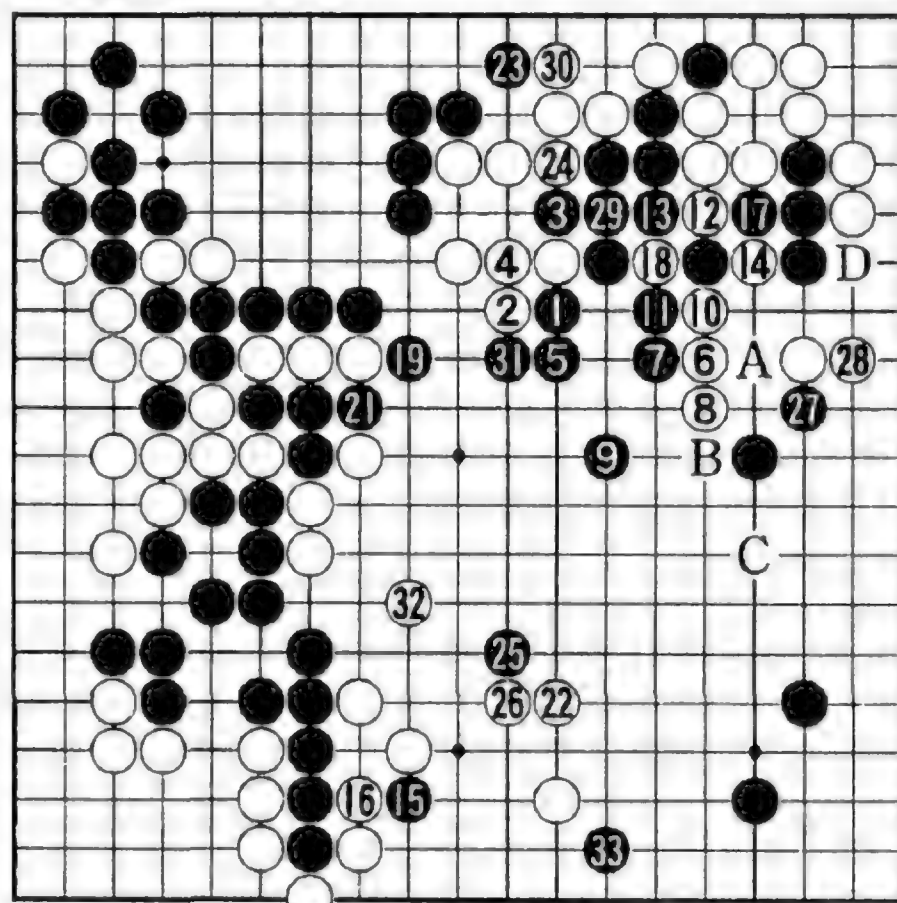


Figure 3 (101-133)
20: connects the ko

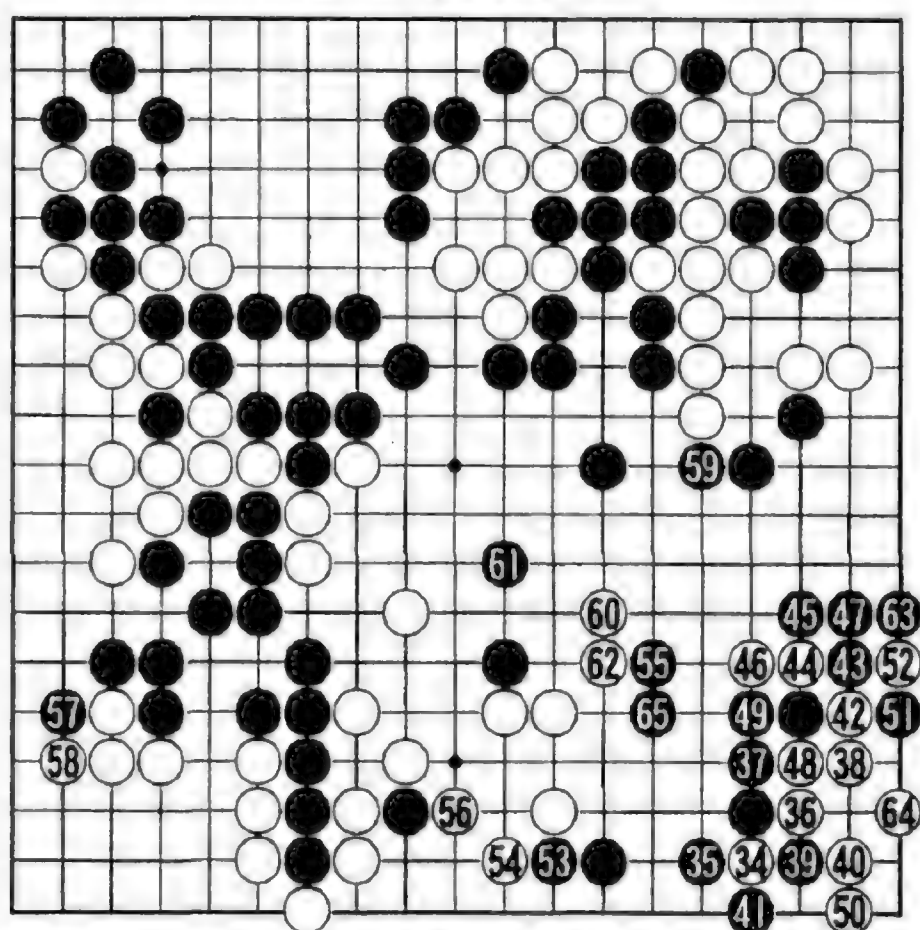


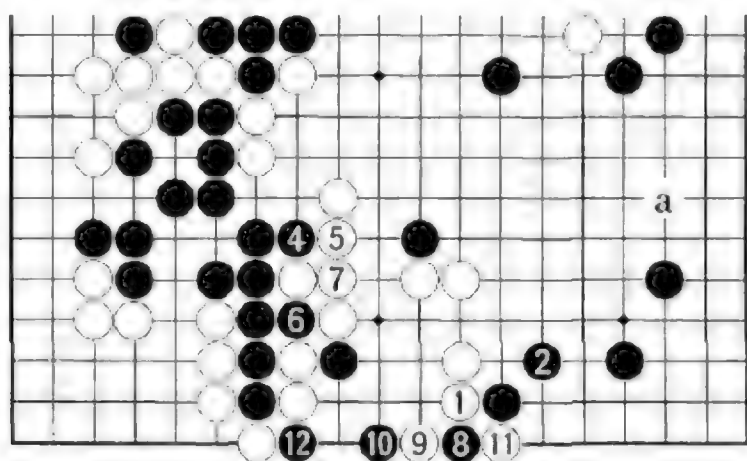
Figure 4 (134-165)

Figure 4 (134-165). *Grateful for the invasion*

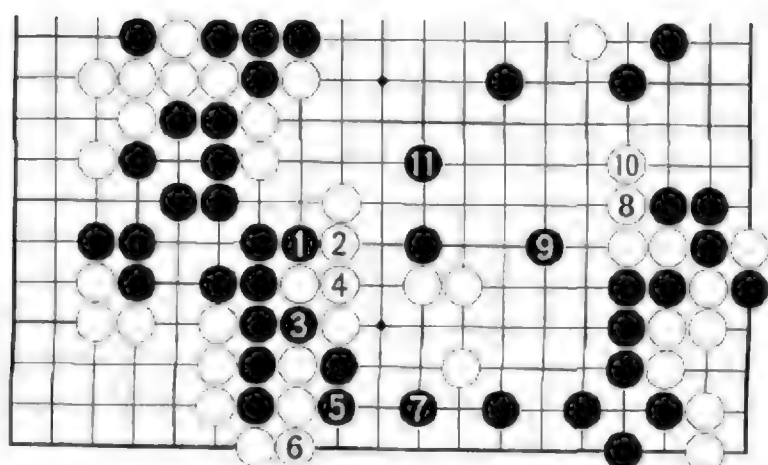
White 34. Otake: 'I was extremely grateful when White attacked the corner. The territory here is destroyed, but the right-side territory swells up. Black probably loses nothing in this sequence. When White lived in the corner, I

was certain of victory. If instead White had blocked at 53, it would have been a close game, though not a loss for Black. Just when I was thinking that there might still be some unpleasantness ahead, White relieved me of my fears.'

Kobayashi: 'Things looked a little bad for me, so I tried to do something different, but actually this simplified the game by settling the shape.' Kobayashi had no confidence in blocking at 1 in *Dia. 4*. He thought Otake might play 'a' next, but the latter intended to answer 'politely' at 2. The reason has to do with the thinness of Kobayashi's first-line connection to the left. White can hardly invest another move here, yet Black has the troublesome attack of 4 to 8, followed by a spectacular tesuji.



Dia. 4 3: elsewhere



Dia. 5

Black 53 and 55 are solid. Black could attack with 1 to 7 in *Dia. 5*, but that gives White the chance to move out with 8 and 10. Black will probably capture the centre white group after 11, but there's no need to take any risks.

Figure 5 (166–200). A momentary alarm

After all the complicated fighting and large-scale trades finish, it turns out there's no difficult endgame left. The only point worthy of note is Black 87. Otake changed colour when Kobayashi reached out to play 88 before Otake had withdrawn his hand. Then he groaned and slapped his knee: he had just lost three

points. Black has the clever tesuji in *Dia. 6*. Fortunately for Otake, he was able to make good his loss by switching to the sente move of 89.

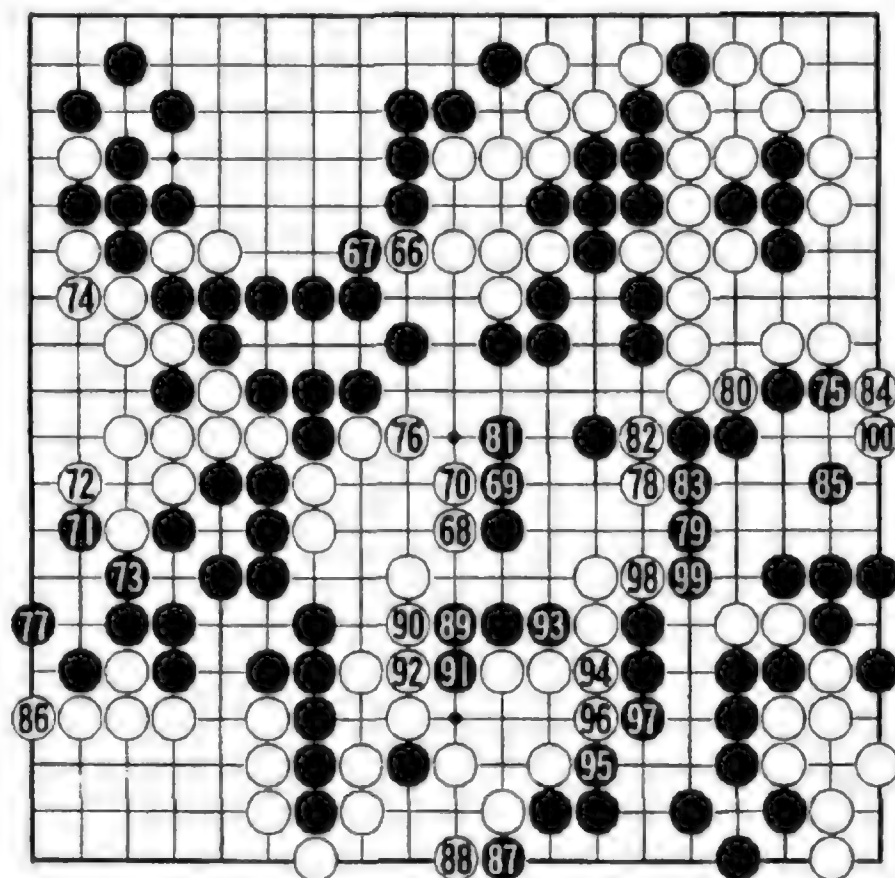
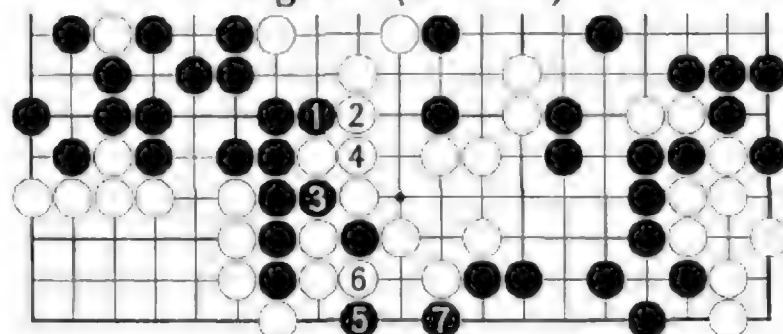


Figure 5 (166–200)



Dia. 6

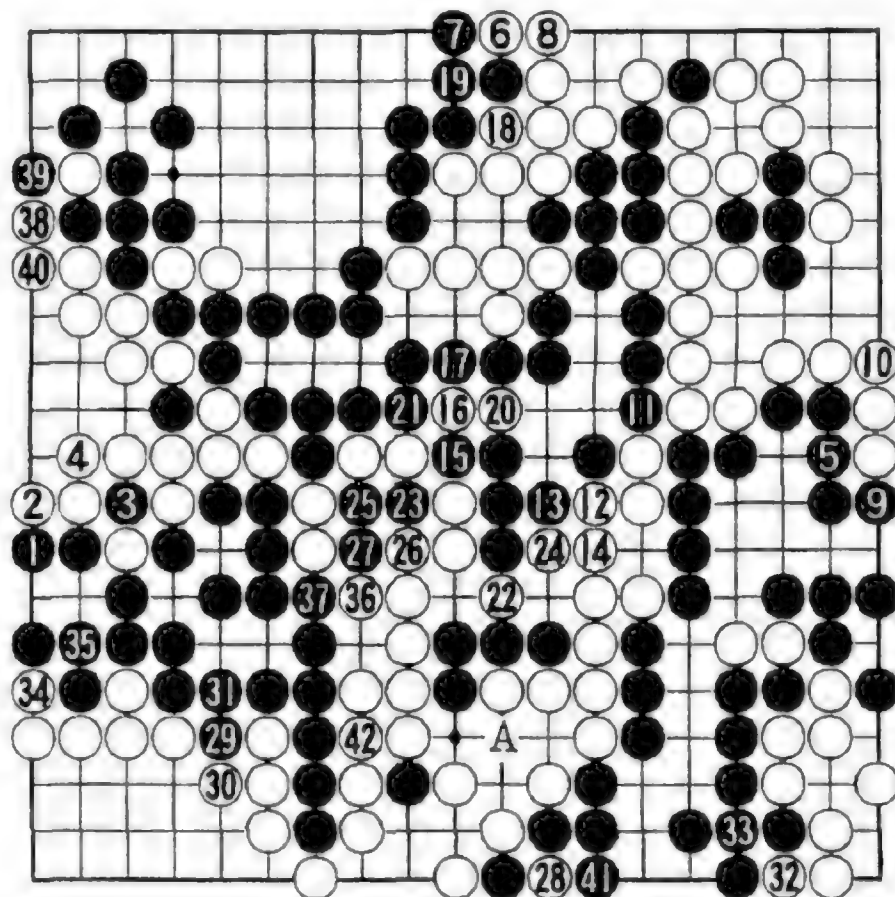


Figure 6 (201–244)

43: connects (below 3); 44: connects (left of 28)

Figure 6 (201–244). A problem in the fuseki

White 6. White 11 is a little bigger. Kobayashi overlooked the fact that 11 and 13 would be sente (if White omits 14, Black hanes

at A).

White 20 initiates the final furikawari of the game. White loses points here, but Kobayashi was aware of that.

Otake: 'The cause of White's loss seems to lie in the opening. Kobayashi mightn't think it was bad for him, but I was grateful for White 14. Thanks to the strategy he adopted, all of Black's stones came to life when we got into the middle game. I can't find any other reason for my win. As far as personal preferences go, this was the kind of game I like and I enjoyed playing it.'

Black wins by 7 1/2 points.

(Adapted from the Asahi and Kido, December 1990)

Game Four

White: Otake Hideo

Black: Kobayashi Koichi

Played in Takarazuka City on 17, 18 October 1990.

In Japan it's the custom for adults to give children cash presents at the New Year. In this game Otake got an unseasonal present from Kobayashi, but he failed to make the most of it.

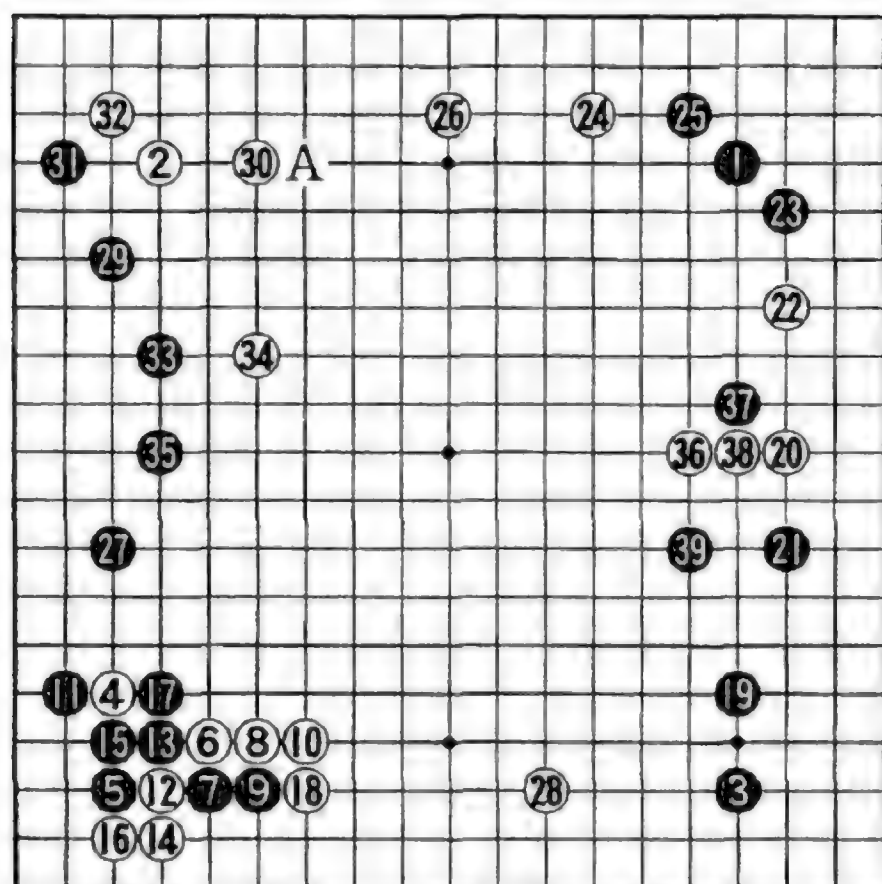


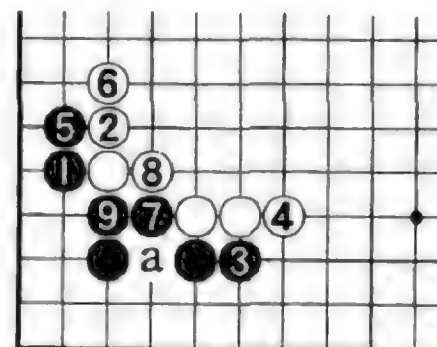
Figure 1 (1-39)

Figure 1 (1-39). A present for Otake

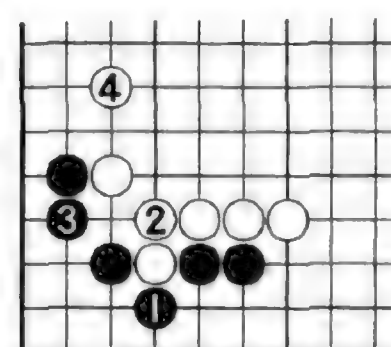
Players following the game were puzzled by the sequence from 9 to 18. Ishii Kunio 9-dan (the referee), Kamimura Kunio 8-dan (the satellite TV commentator) and Kiyonari 9-dan all said that they'd never seen this shape before.

With good reason — they all agreed it was good for White. The truth came out after the game. Kobayashi: 'I made a mistake. I must have lost two or three points here.' Otake: 'You gave me a New Year present.'

Before crawling with 9, Black has to attach at 1 in *Dia. 1*. The continuation to 9 is a popular joseki. White won't use 2 to wedge in at 'a', because he would only capture one stone after Black 7, in contrast to the result in the figure.



Dia. 1



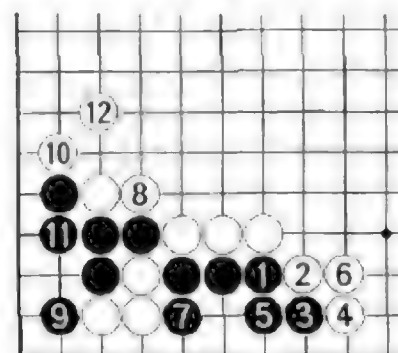
Dia. 2

Black 11. Kobayashi: 'I felt tempted to take sente by crawling once more (at 18), then switching elsewhere.'

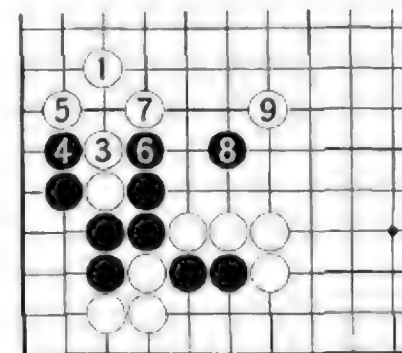
Black 13. Following *Dia. 2* is out of the question.

Black 17. Black could capture the white stones by following *Dia. 3*, but giving White so much outside thickness would be terrible.

Black 27 is a very important move: you can see just how important by putting a white stone in its place. Otake wondered if he should have played there with 24.



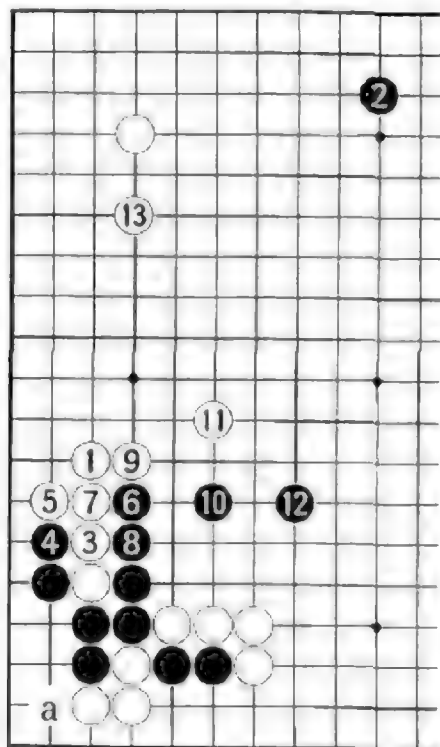
Dia. 3



Dia. 4

Dia. 4. Kobayashi: 'Black can't afford to answer 1, so I suppose I'd extend to 26 in the figure.' That means that White can next pull out his stone with 3. The result to 9 looks reasonable for White. However, this diagram was abandoned because Kobayashi had been assuming White would connect in answer to the atari of 6. On seeing 7, Kobayashi suggested peeping at 6 in *Dia. 5* instead. Even so the moyo White builds on the left side, though not certain territory, seems to give him a satisfactory result. Otake agreed that this might have been better for White, but the truth

seems to be that pulling out half-dead stones (i.e. 4 in the figure) like this doesn't appeal to him aesthetically. Also, in this variation Black is likely to get in the hane at 'a', a big move in itself.



Dia. 5

The psychological effects of Kobayashi's joseki mistake had an important bearing on this game. Kobayashi was playing patiently, watching intently for a chance to catch up. Otake, while not exactly coasting, felt that the quickest way to win was to nurse his lead and not do anything out of the ordinary. This difference comes out in Black 37. Usually one is reluctant to make a peep like this, as it may be captured later, making it an outright loss. However, Kobayashi is concerned that this may be his only chance to force with 37.

Before leaving this figure, note how patiently Kobayashi plays with 35. He is aiming at attacking at A later.

Figure 2 (40-67). Kobayashi's fine move

The direct follow-up of the marked black stone is A. Whether or not this bomb goes off or fizzles out is one of the focal points of the game. In view of that, Otake could have considered playing 40 at 49 (in that case, Kobayashi planned to attach at B).

White 48 is Otake's first dubious move of the game. It takes some profit, but poses little threat to the centre black group. A spectator reported that when Otake played 48, Kobayashi glanced up at him in surprise. When Otake saw 49, he started muttering to himself more than ever (Otake keeps up a busy dialogue with himself during games).

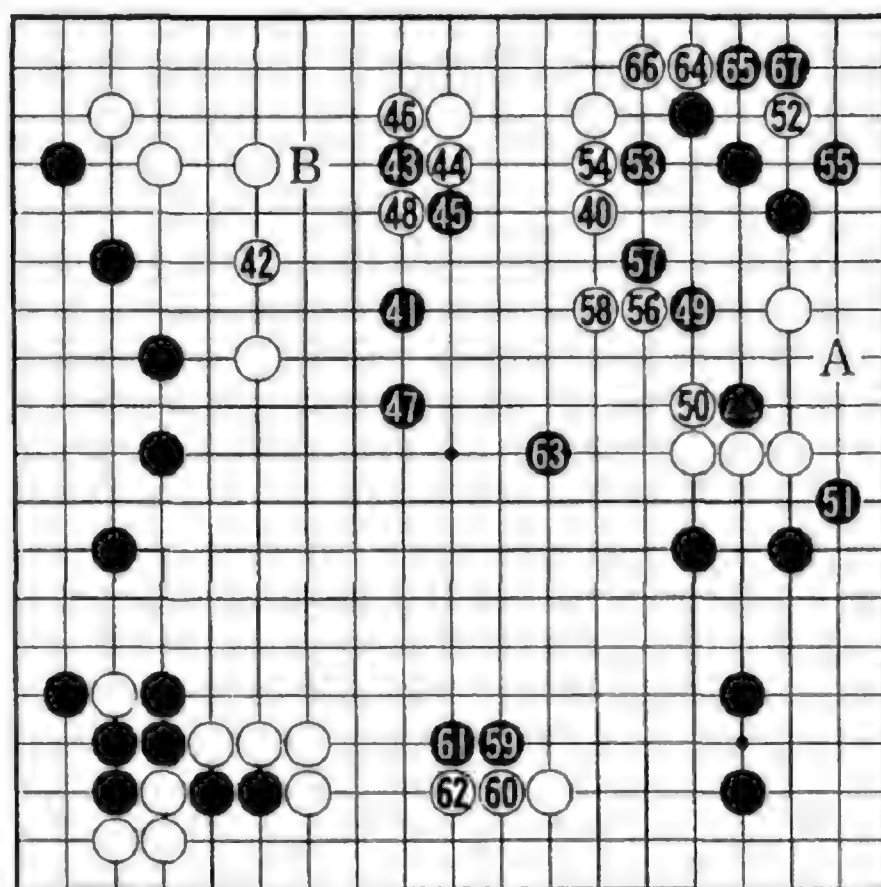
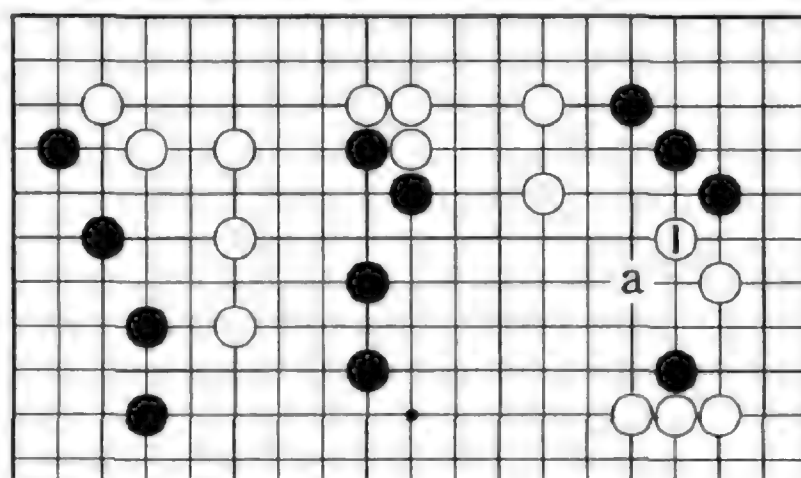


Figure 2 (40-67)

White had to play 48 at 1 or 'a' in Dia. 6. Either move would keep White's groups linked up and aim at attacking the centre and corner black groups.



Dia. 6

Kobayashi's chance has come surprisingly early. Black 49 is the vital point of the middle game: it splits up the enemy forces and prepares to attack the white group. The scattered black stones in the top centre, stones that by right should be happy if they can flee from an enemy attack, are now assuming an offensive role. Otake commented later that he'd returned Kobayashi's present with interest.

Black's follow-up at 51 is big. Kobayashi: 'I thought that this made the game interesting.' Translated, that probably means he was now confident in his position.

White 52 was a timely probe that made Kobayashi think for 36 minutes.

Black 63. Otake: 'This was a good move. Perhaps I should have played 56 at 63.' Ishii Kunio called 63 the winning move. It shows

that Kobayashi knows something about centre play too.

For students of the corner: Black loses the capturing race if he tries to capture 64 with 1 in *Dia. 7*.

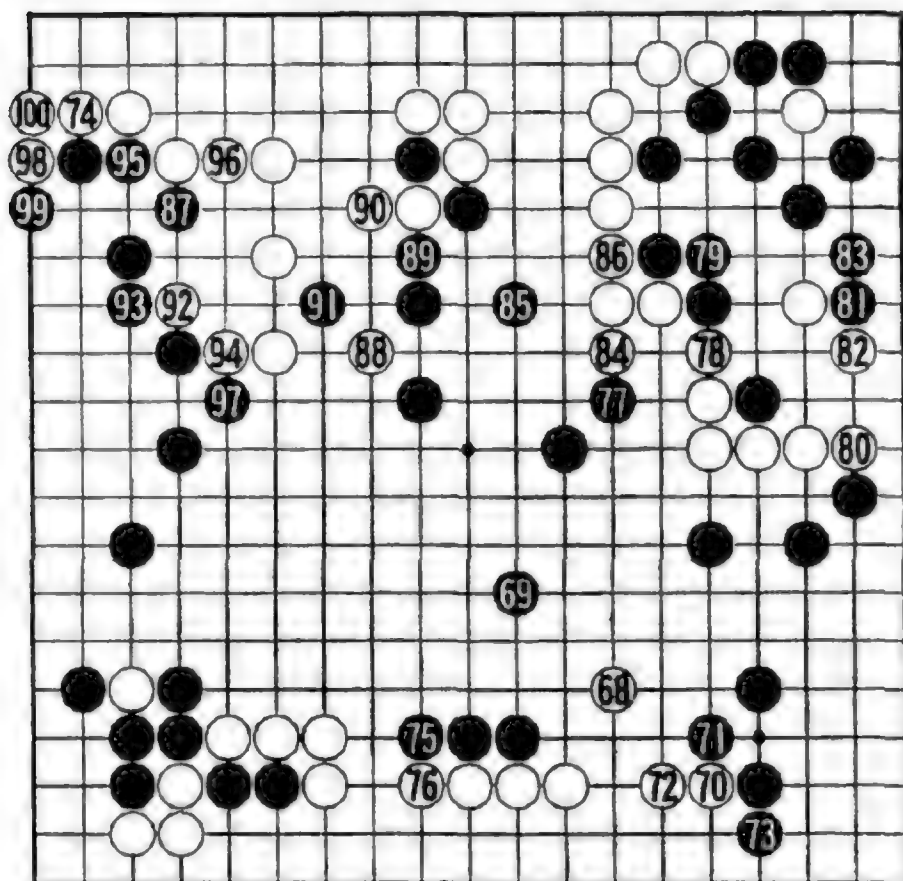
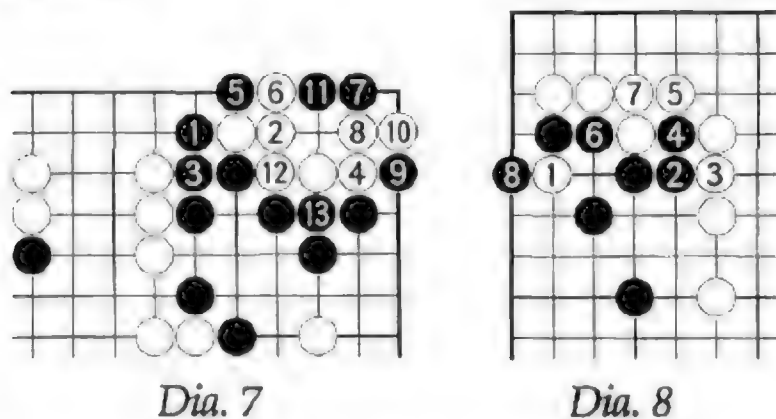
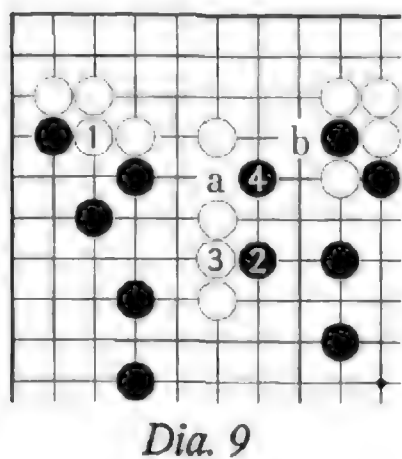


Figure 3 (68-100)



Dia. 9

Figure 3 (68-100). Kobayashi starts to wind up the game.

White 68. The sealed move.

With 69, 75 and 77, Black suddenly threatens to turn the centre, which in this game had appeared to be valueless, into territory.

Black 87 is another good move. White loses the endgame capture of 1 in *Dia. 8*, as Black can counter with 2 to 8. If, out of distaste for this, White plays 88 at 1 in *Dia. 9*, Black attacks

from the other side, making miai of 'a' and 'b'.

Figure 4 (101-147). Remorseless moves and a hidden pitfall

White 6. Ishii: 'This is the decisive losing move. If he had followed *Dia. 10* he could have fought on. The reason why White counters with 6 in the figure is that if he plays 8 immediately, Black will make the atari. However, the result is that Black makes the good-aji connection of 7, a thick move that is more of a minus for White. In effect, White has taken time off to play an endgame move in the midst of a busy fight.'

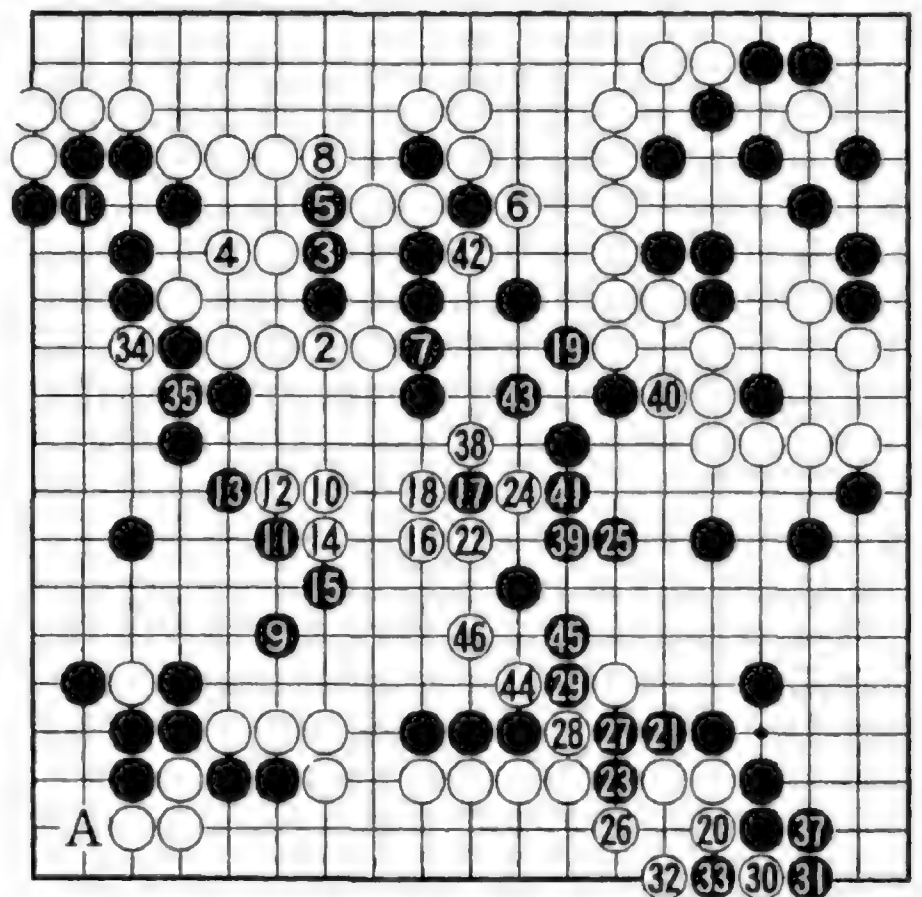
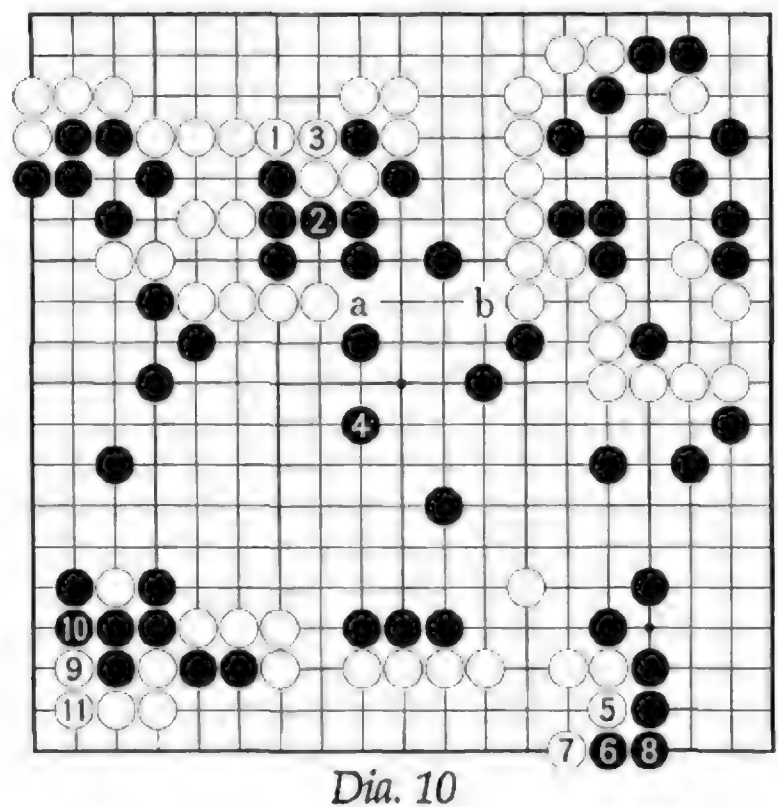


Figure 4 (101-147)
36: ko (at 30); 47: ko



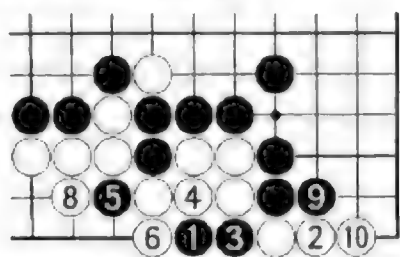
Dia. 10

Dia. 10. If White plays patiently with 1 and 3, Black will probably reinforce his thin centre position with 4. White could then switch to

the large moves of 5 and 9 at the bottom. The virtue of playing this way is that, because of the defect at 'a', moving out with White 'b' is virtually sente. White would still have a chance.

Black 9 surprised the players in the pressroom, who had expected Black to expand the centre instead. The best White can do, however, is to approach at 10, so the left side swells up considerably up to 15. Then Black 19 makes this group as solid as a rock. Kobayashi's grip on the game is becoming tighter and tighter. It must be very discouraging for the opponent to have the life squeezed out of his game like this.

There is an interesting point in the endgame where Kobayashi made a misreading but, luckily for him, didn't play the move that would have set off the trap. It comes up after 21 and 23. White counters with 26 to 32, hoping for a ko fight here. If Black wanted to avoid the ko, he might think of making the placement at 1 in *Dia. 11*, but, as Kamimura pointed out in his live commentary, this move doesn't work. White has a surprising counter at 2. Even if Black attacks with 3 etc., White can extend to 10 (playing a ko with Black 10—White 9 would be absurd).

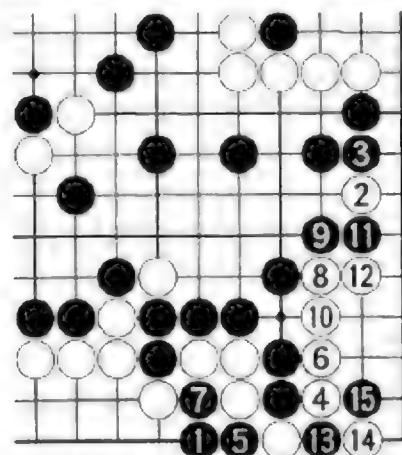


Dia. 11 7: at 3

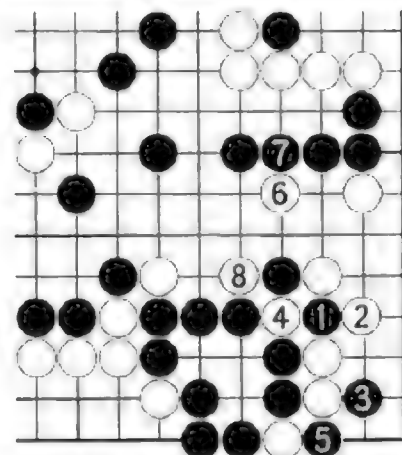
Kobayashi didn't see White 2. When told about it after the game, he said: 'I was thinking of making the placement at 1. This would have been such a shock I might have lost.' Even if *Dia. 11* had been played, Black would still have won if he had switched to A in the figure, according to the players in the pressroom, but still who knows what would have happened in actual play, with Kobayashi's time running short?

The reason why Kobayashi didn't notice White 2 in *Dia. 11* is that he was preoccupied with analysing a different sequence, namely, the counterattack of 2 and 4 in *Dia. 12*. The result is a ko. Instead of 9 —

Dia. 13. Black might try to annihilate White with 1 etc., but he gets some very bad aji after 2 to 8.



Dia. 12



Dia. 13

Even though Kobayashi hadn't noticed the more immediate pitfall in front of his eyes, he decided that since he was ahead he could play safe.

Putting aside his joseki mistake, this game was a triumph for Kobayashi and the Kobayashi style. His win turned the tide of the series in his favour.

White resigns after Black 147.

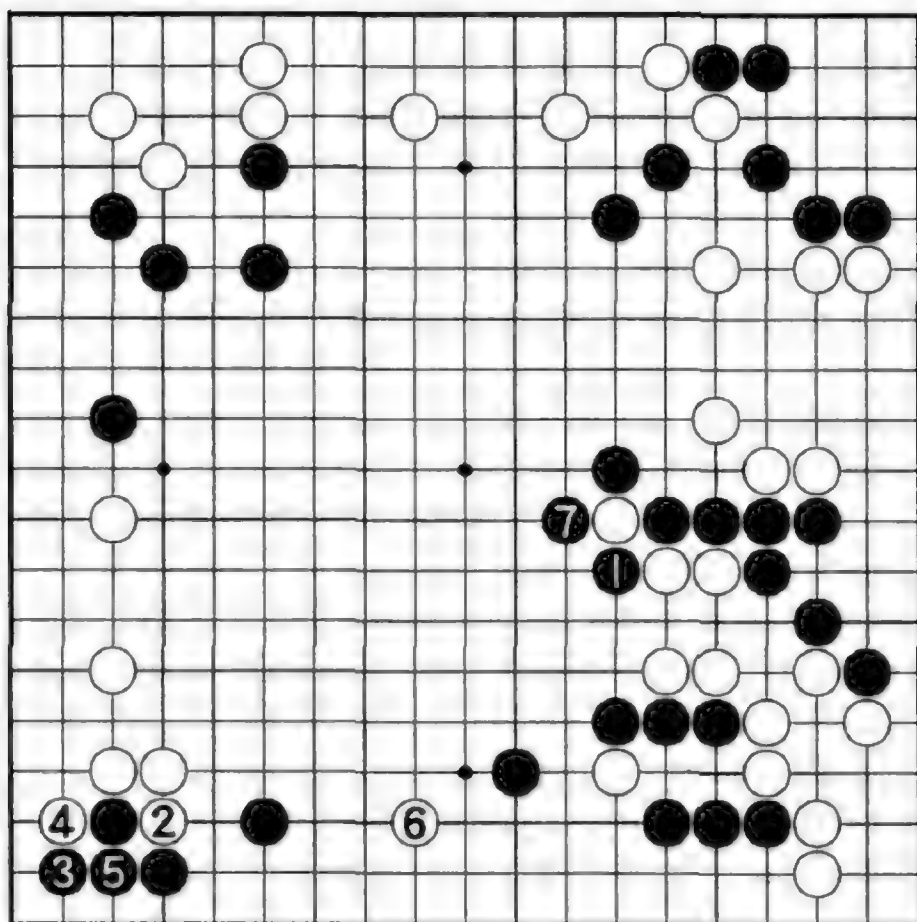
(Adapted from the Asahi)



Game Five

With the score standing at 2-all, this was the crucial game of the series. Recently the Meijin title has been decided by lopsided scores such as 4-0 and 4-1, so it was satisfying to see a hard-fought match for a change. This was reflected not only in the score: each game had its own excitement.

There was Otake's premature resignation in Game One. Let's put Otake's second thoughts on the record: 'I'm sorry for upsetting everyone. I should at any rate have fought on longer.' In Game Two we saw Otake's endgame brilliancy. In Game Three his approach move to a star-point stone on move 3. Up to this point Otake was the star, but Kobayashi refused to let himself be overshadowed. In Game Four he won comfortably despite making a mistake in a joseki. Then this game...



Dia. A

You can't rely on the go proverb?

Dia. A. Anyone would assume that you would flee when Black cut at 1. Yet Kobayashi tenukied, letting Black make the ponnuki of 7. Hasn't the Meijin heard of the proverb, 'the ponnuki is worth 30 points'? On seeing this position one professional commented: 'Giving the opponent a ponnuki goes against the logic of go. Black should win easily.' Another offered this opinion: 'Making too much thickness is meaningless. Giving Black the ponnuki was a good strategy.' It's not easy to sort out what's going on. Opinions differ according to whether you belong to the Thickness school or the Territory school. What is the reader's evaluation?

White: Kobayashi Koichi

Black: Otake Hideo

Played at Shuzenji-machi, Shizuoka Prefecture on 25, 26 October 1990.

Commentary by Awaji Shuzo 9-dan.

Figure 1 (1-50). *A fragmented game*

With 1 and 3 Otake follows the 'Kobayashi style'. The players have been showing us a different fuseki each game, so there's no danger of getting bored.

Black 21 sets up a ladder for Black after he cuts above 8, so White forestalls that with 22 and 24. The forcing combination of 25 and 27 also appeared in this year's Honinbo title match (see GW61, page 36).

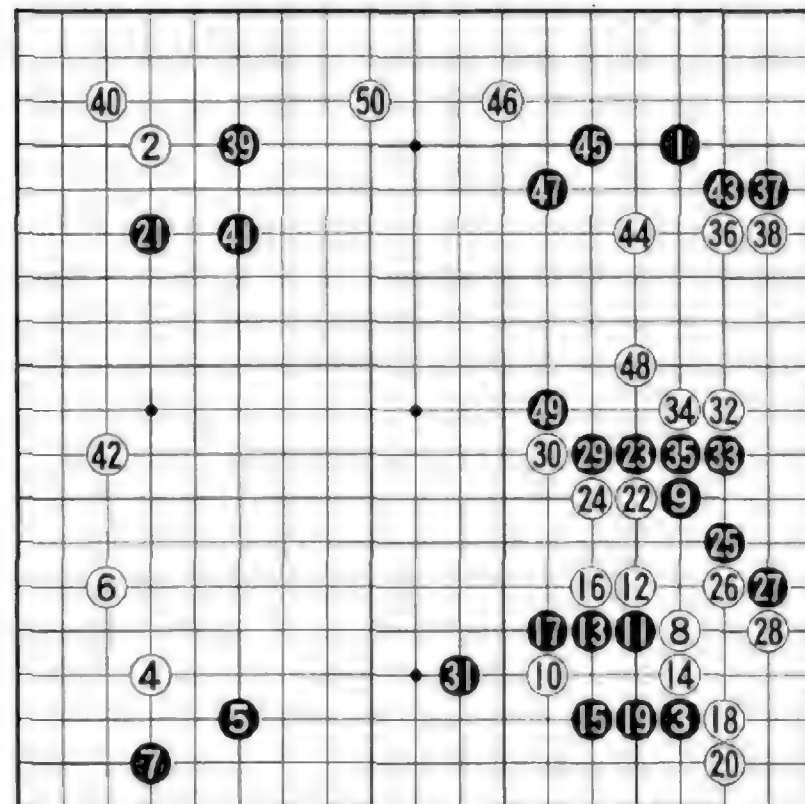


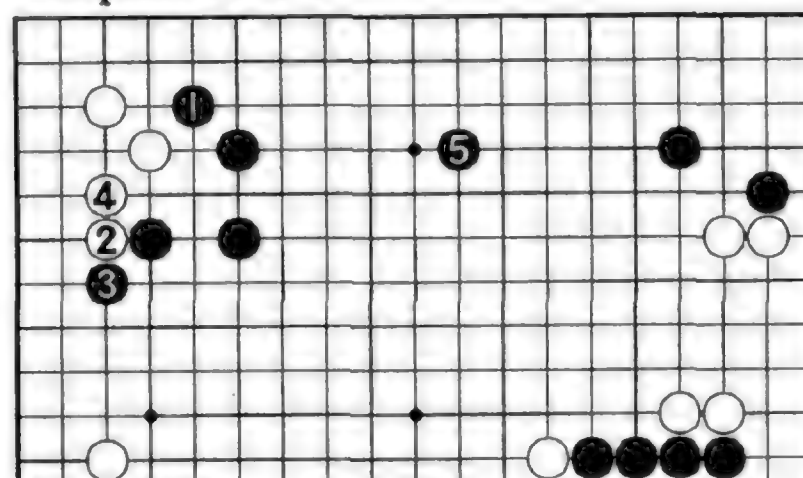
Figure 1 (1-50)

White 32 is the vital point. White 38 forestalls Black 38, but even so it is a patient move, as White would very much like to switch to 39.

White 42 is a better move than I realized at the time. I thought that the top was bigger than the left side, but while White seems concerned with the left side he is actually taking aim at the bottom.

Otake regretted 43. When White splits the top with 46 and 50, one can see why Black might be dissatisfied: his moyo has been fragmented. Otake didn't say how he should have played, but my guess is something like *Dia. 1*, where Black stakes out a large-scale position. Black doesn't expect to get all the territory at the top, but deciding how to reduce it won't be easy for White.

Kobayashi was probably happy with the development to 50.



Dia. 1: moyo potential

Figure 2 (51-67). *The highlight of the game*

Rin Kaiho has commented: 'When you play for thickness, you look like falling behind in

territory, so you are tempted to enclose on a large scale or to attack. Otake has the daring not to start a fight.' I agree completely. Otake is really patient: he's in no hurry to seek the fruits of his thickness.

In this light, I feel that 53 is typical of Otake's style. I would be in a hurry to convert my thickness into territory by taking the corner as in *Dia. 2*. (If 2 at 5, Black 2 applies pressure to the stones to the right.)

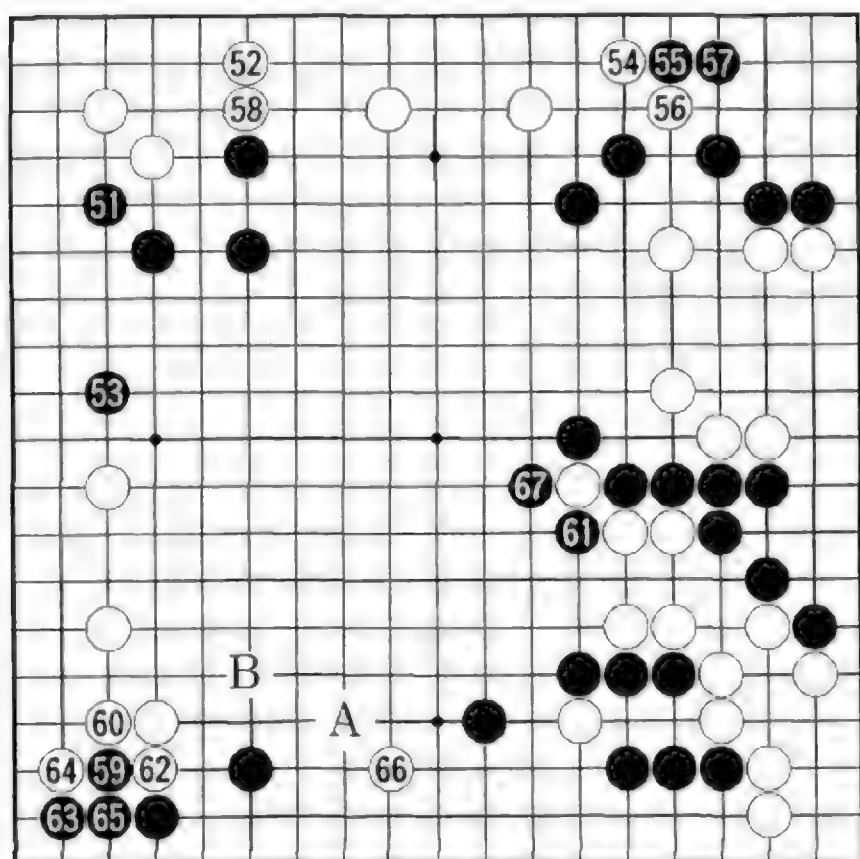
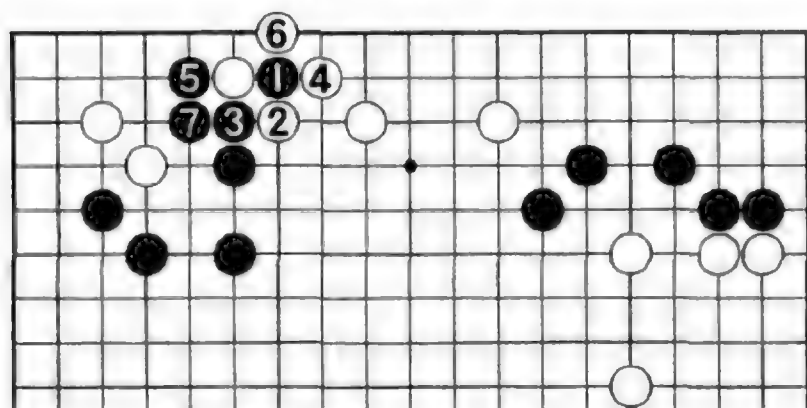


Figure 2 (51-67)



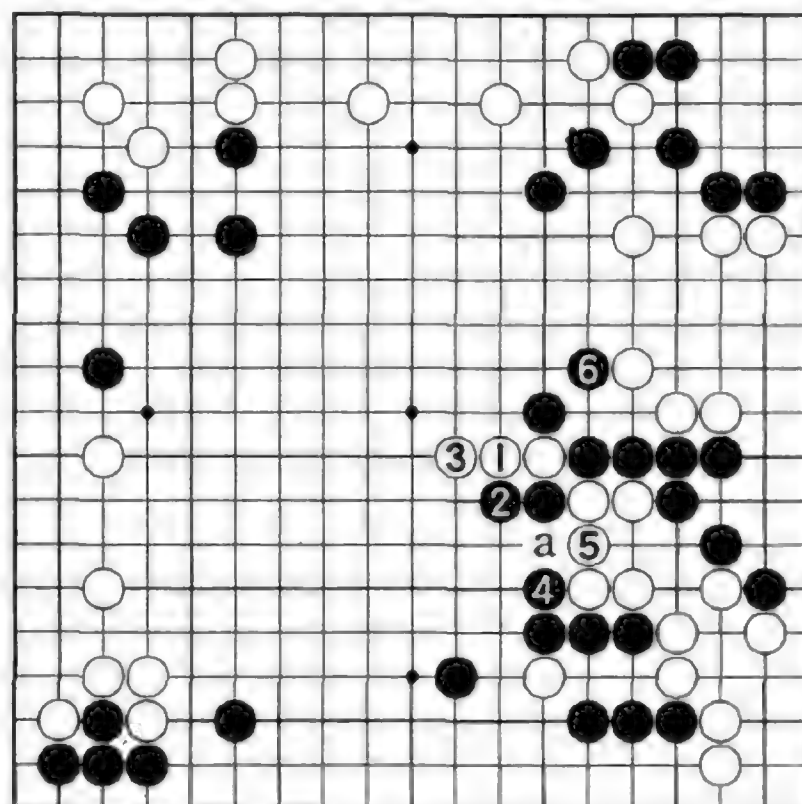
Dia. 2: the fruits of thickness

The cut of 61 brings us to the highlight of the game. Black wants to seize the overall initiative with this cut, but simply enclosing the bottom with A is also feasible. The only thing is that Otake doesn't like single-purpose enclosing moves. Black B would also be strong. Otake comments that the comparison between these two moves gave him a lot of trouble.

White 62 and 64 are efficient forcing moves. At this point Kobayashi started thinking hard — the possibility that he might give Otake a ponnuki occurred to me. Sure enough, he switched to 66. This strategy is the reverse of obvious. My guess is that Otake was con-

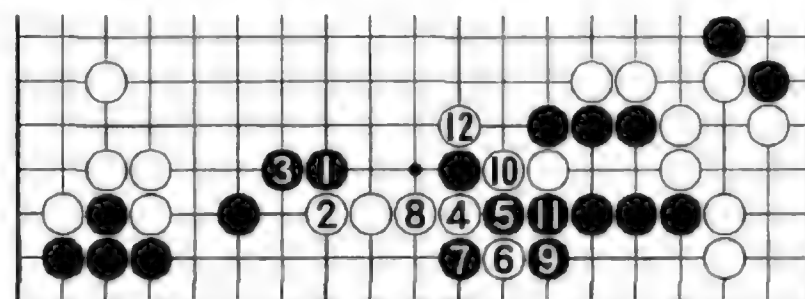
vinced that extending at White 67 was the only move.

Otake probably expected 1 to 6 in *Dia. 3*. Black 2 at 'a' also looks reasonable. Perhaps Otake's analysis was that either way White gets a burden in the centre, so Black secures all the bottom area, giving him a good result.



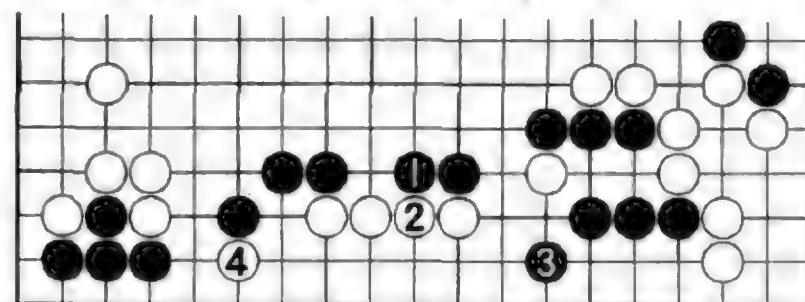
Dia. 3: what Otake expected

That's the way anyone would analyse it. Usually it would never occur to you that White might give Black a ponnuki. That makes Kobayashi's good judgement all the more impressive.



Dia. 4: satisfactory for White

Even though Black gets a ponnuki, the board is fragmented into small positions, all of which have already been stabilized, so there's little scope for thickness to do its work. Yet if Black declines to make the ponnuki, attacking with 1 in *Dia. 4*, White easily settles his group with the two-step hane of 4 and 6. If Black makes a serious attempt to capture White, playing 5 here at 1 in *Dia. 5*, White can use the contact play of 4 to settle his group.



Dia. 5: White will live

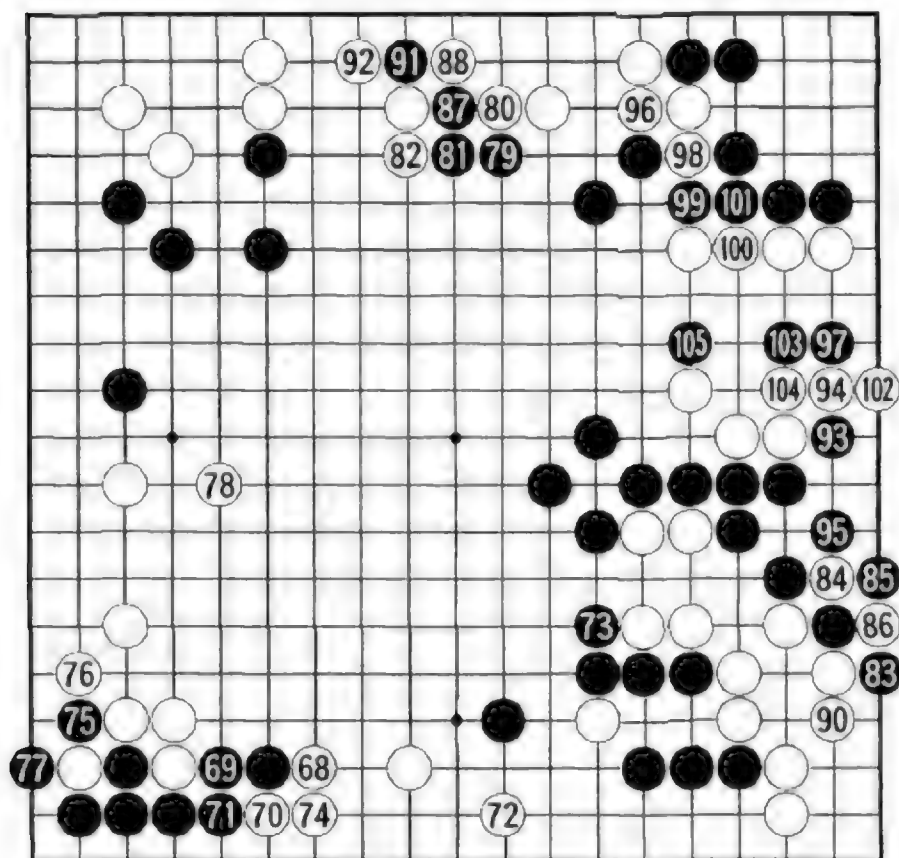
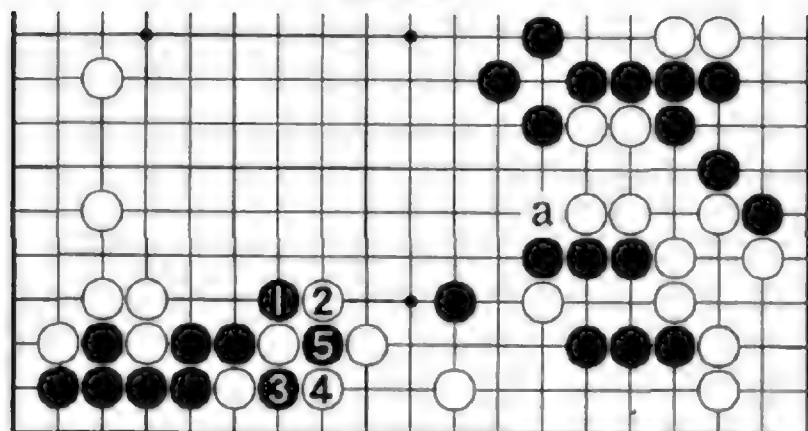


Figure 3 (68-105)
89: ko



Dia. 6: ko favours White.

Figure 3 (68-105). The thread snaps.

White makes shape in a flash with 68 to 72. This is clever play.

Black 73 astonished me. Should one call this move dignified or too placid? When you lose after playing a move like this, you're left with regrets afterwards, but there's no move that's just right for Black. If he plays 1 in Dia. 6, White plays a ko. The burden on White is light, on top of which he has a threat at 'a', so Black can hardly fight the ko.

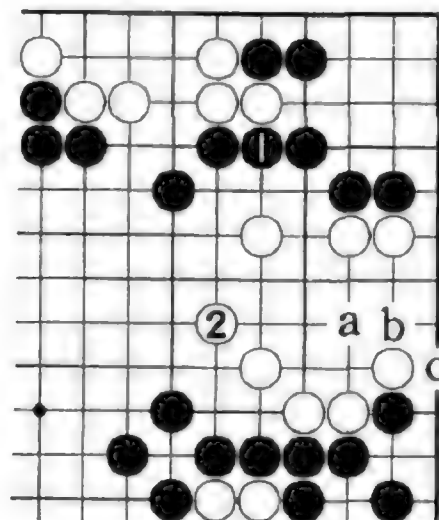
The game has become uninteresting for Black, which is a sign that White's strategy has succeeded.

Otake spent a lot of time on his sealed move of 79. The problem is how to make use of his thickness, but the impact of the ko of 83 and 85 is too slight. I tried to find something better for Black, but couldn't come up with anything impressive.

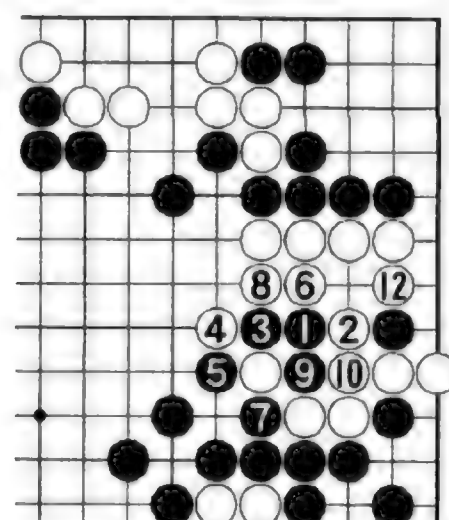
Black 93 and 95 threaten the clamp at 97, but White annoyingly answers at 96. Black 97 shows that Otake has lost his patience: connecting at 1 in Dia. 7 is the only move. Accord-

ing to Kobayashi, he planned to live with 2. White 'a' would be good enough, but typically the Meijin refuses to compromise. If Black 'b', White answers at 'c' and lives.

Black 97 has the effect of hastening Otake's defeat, but psychologically he probably didn't feel like playing solidly and waiting for a chance later. Otake started out by staking out solid positions, but here the thread of his game snaps.



Dia. 7



Dia. 8

11: connects

Black 103. Black can't take away White's eye shape with 1 and 3 in Dia. 8. White squeezes with 4 on, then lives with 12. If White lives here, there's nothing left to fight over.

Black 103 and 105 are an emergency measure: Black aims to kill White by reducing him to one large eye. If Black's neighbouring positions were perfectly secure, there'd be an outside chance of this working, but there are no chinks in Kobayashi's armour. He has already read it all out.

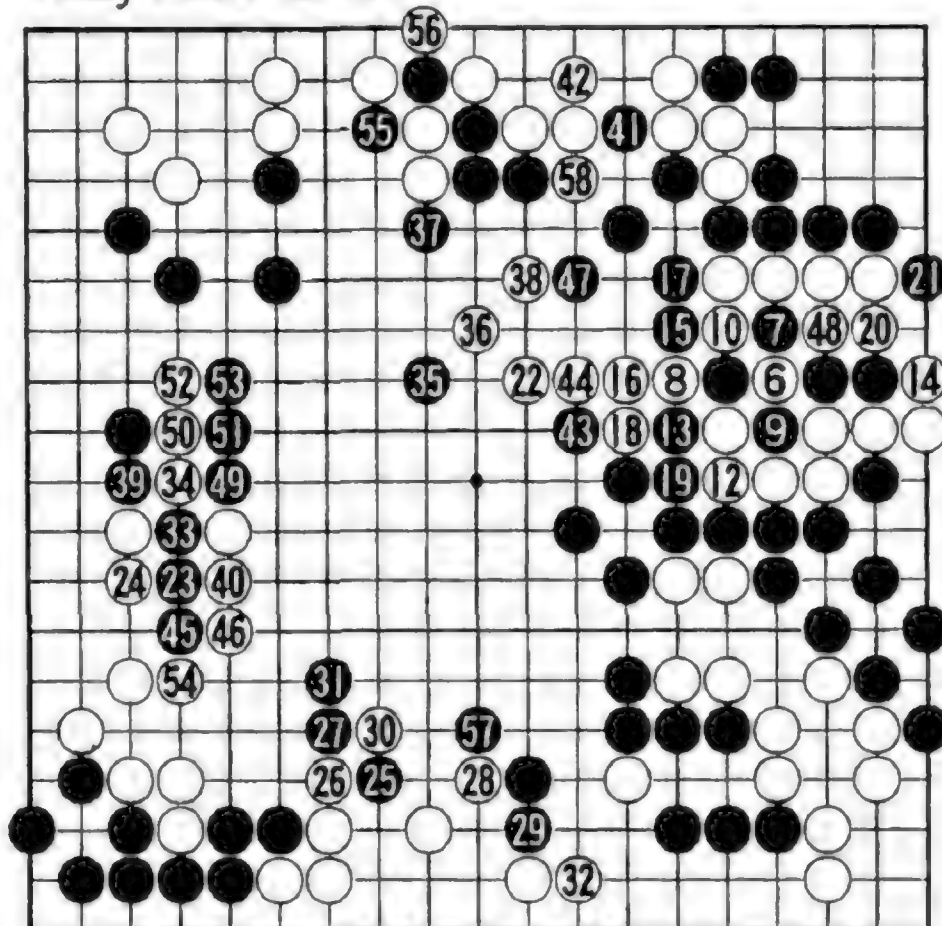
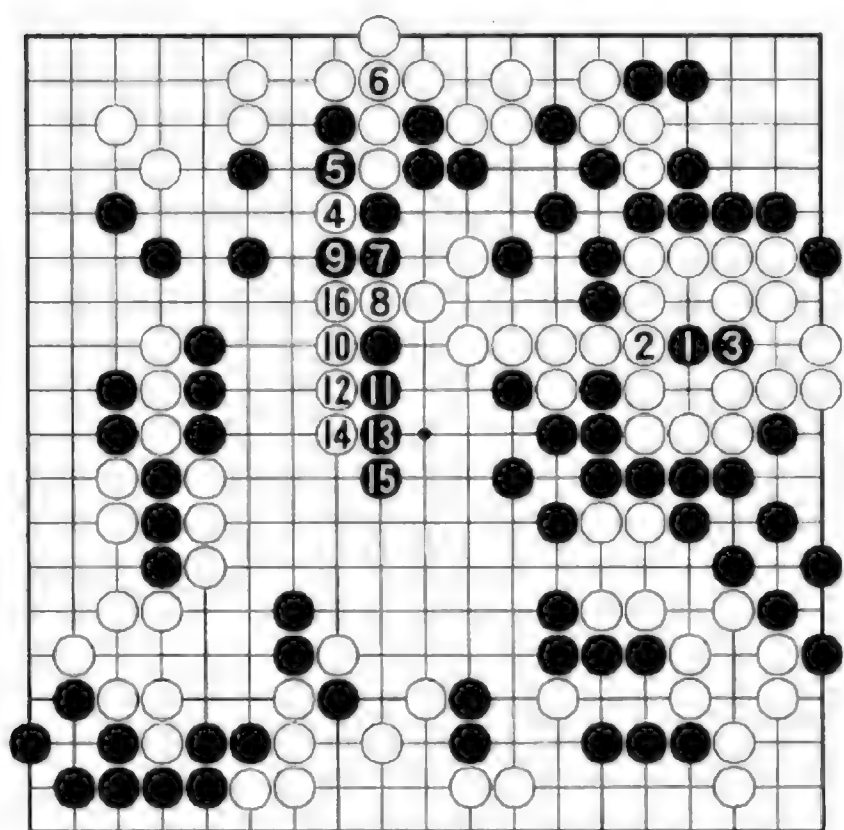


Figure 4 (106-158)

11: connects



The ponnuki didn't help Otake much. Taking a keen interest is Sugiuchi 9-dan, the referee. This win swung the series decisively in Kobayashi's favour.



Dia. 9: White can't be killed.

Figure 4 (106–158). A great game for Kobayashi

White 8. White could live by descending at 21, but, looking ahead to the next game, Kobayashi understandably prefers to go all-out.

From 27 on Black completes his preparations for capturing the group, but in the end he runs out of steam.

Black 57. Even if Black plays 1 and 3 in Dia. 9, destroying White's eye shape, he can't hope for one chance in a thousand of success. There are various ways White could rescue his

group: the sequence to 16 is just one example.

Kobayashi Meijin played no dubious moves in this game: it may be one of his masterpieces.

Black resigns after White 158.

(Kido, December 1990)



Otake's early lead had disappeared and his Meijin challenge had run into difficulties. Would he be able to recover from the shock of losing to Kobayashi's unorthodox play?

Game Six

White: Otake Hideo

Black: Kobayashi Koichi

Played in Ito City on 7, 8 November 1990.

Commentary by Kobayashi Koichi.

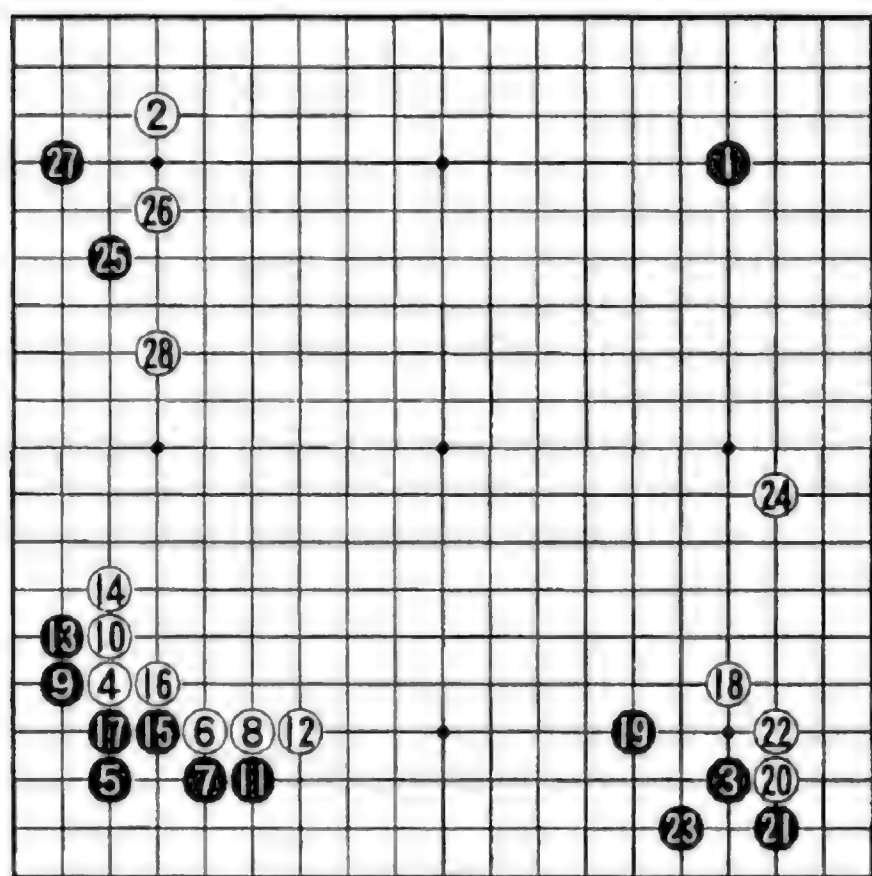


Figure 1 (1-28)

Figure 1 (1-28). Three josekis

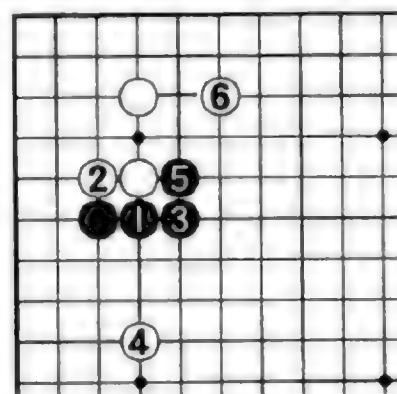
Kobayashi responds to the mokuhashushi (5-3) move of 4 by invading immediately, as he did in the fourth game. Kobayashi: 'When the opponent leaves the corner open, going in immediately is fighting spirit. I do it because I think it's not bad for Black, but evaluating the result is difficult, as it does make White thick and he has the komi.'

Playing 9 at 11 was Kobayashi's elementary slip in the first game. After completing the joseki, Otake left the room, and Kobayashi addressed the Asahi reporter: 'I got into awful trouble the other day. I wonder how much I lost. I don't think it was as much as three points.'

Black 19. Because Black has a low position on the bottom left, he makes balance with a high move here.

White 26 starts the third joseki of the game. Otake later commented: 'I played three josekis I don't like.' Of course, that doesn't mean that White is doing badly.

What if Black uses 27 to push up at 1 in Dia. 1? Kobayashi: 'Black won't want to do this. White attacks him with 2 to 6.'



Dia. 1: Black comes under attack.

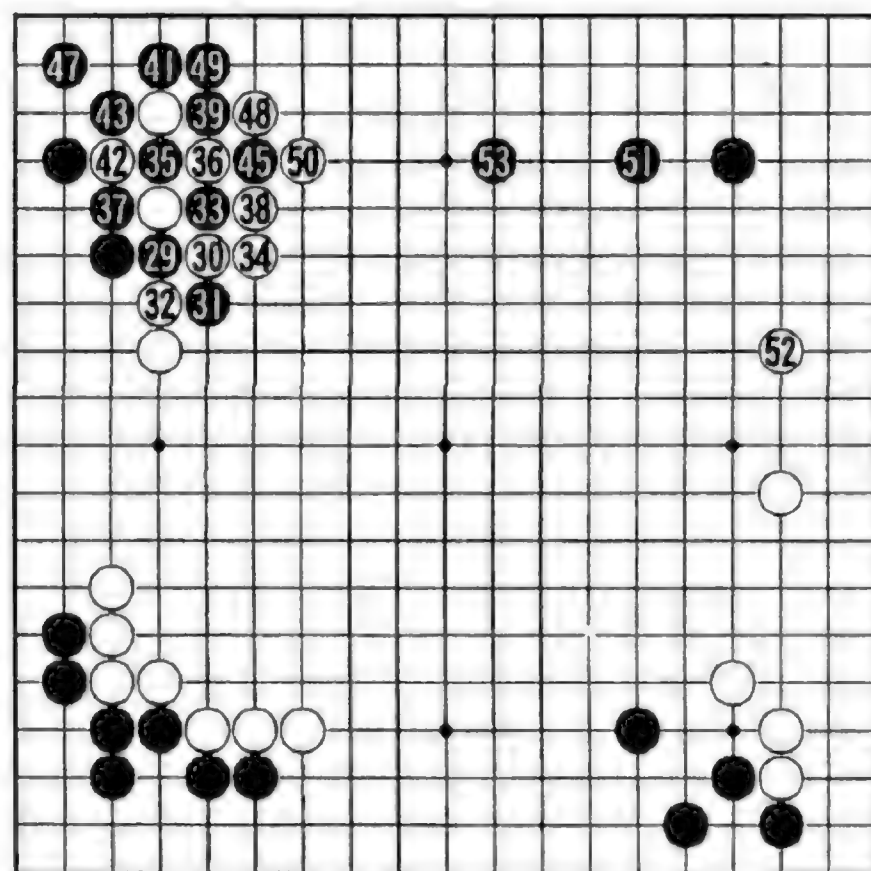
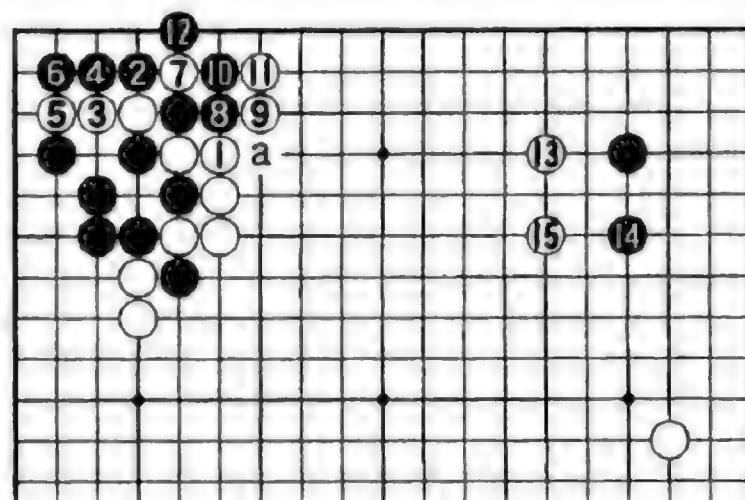


Figure 2 (29-53)

40: ko (right of 37); 44: connects (at 35);
46: connects (at 33)



Dia. 2

Figure 2 (29-53). Counteracting thickness

White 40. Kobayashi: 'I expected White to connect at 1 in Dia. 2, then to build up a large moyo at the top with 3 to 15. Black will aim at the cut at 'a', but this will be quite an open game.'

Black permits White 52, but 51 and 53 serve to hold White's top left thickness in check.

Figure 3 (54-78). Falling a move behind?

White 54 is a very interesting move, but 56 is not the continuation Otake originally planned. In fact, answering 55 docilely at 56

looks a little dubious. Otake said that he should have exchanged White A for Black B, then switched to somewhere around C. At the time he couldn't work out exactly what was the best point for building his moyo: a move above C or one point to the right.

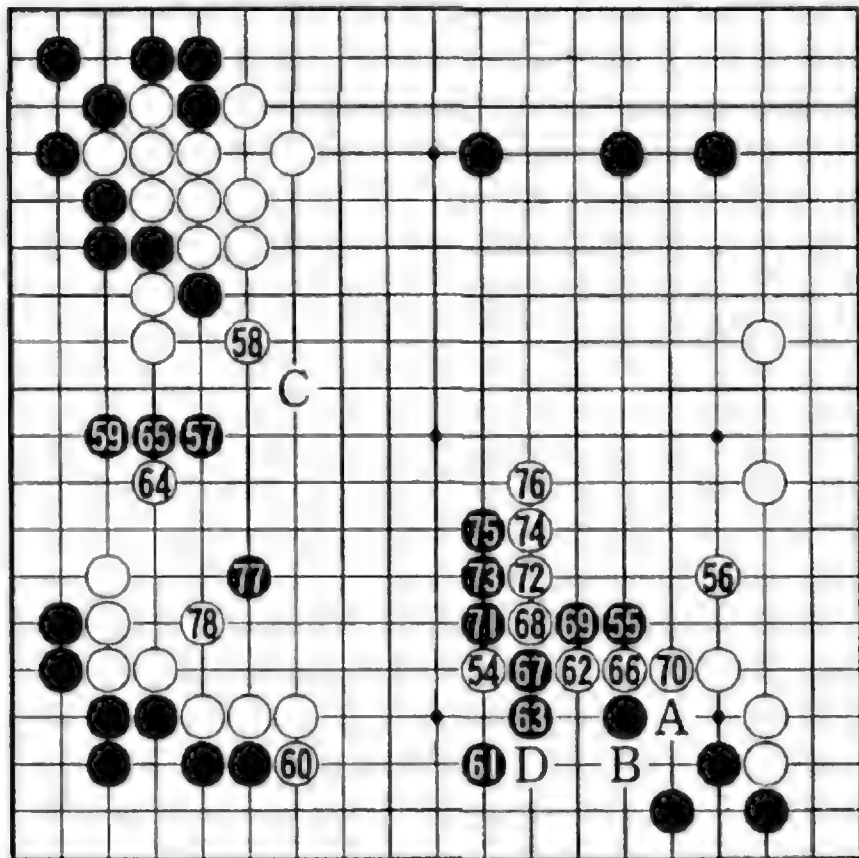
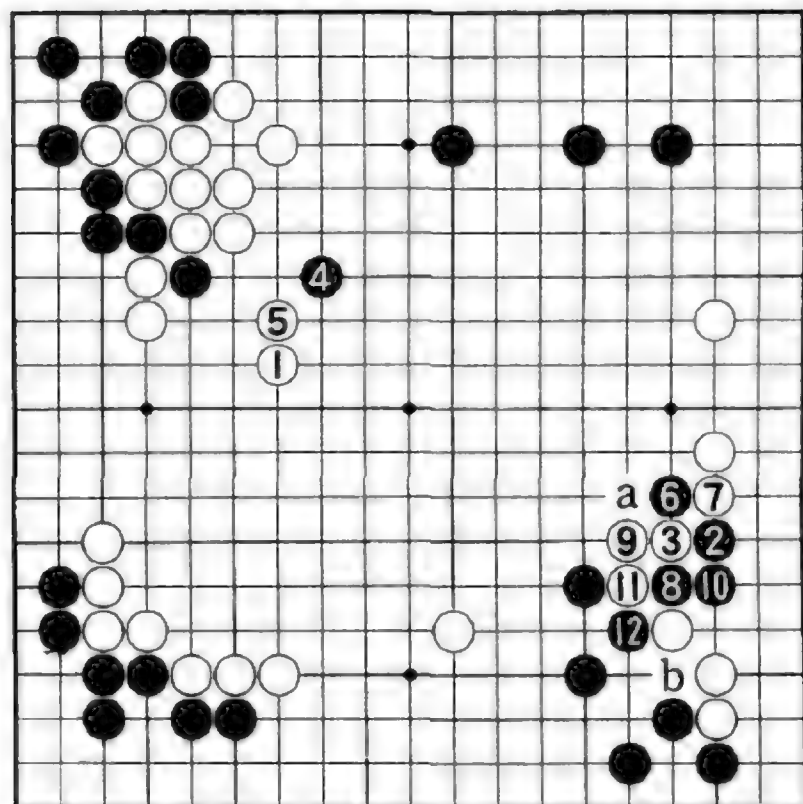


Figure 3 (54-78)

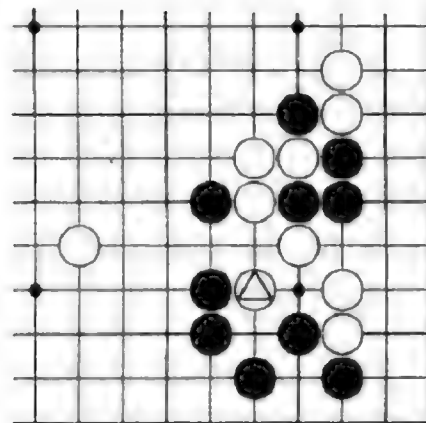


Dia. 3: the reason for the forcing move

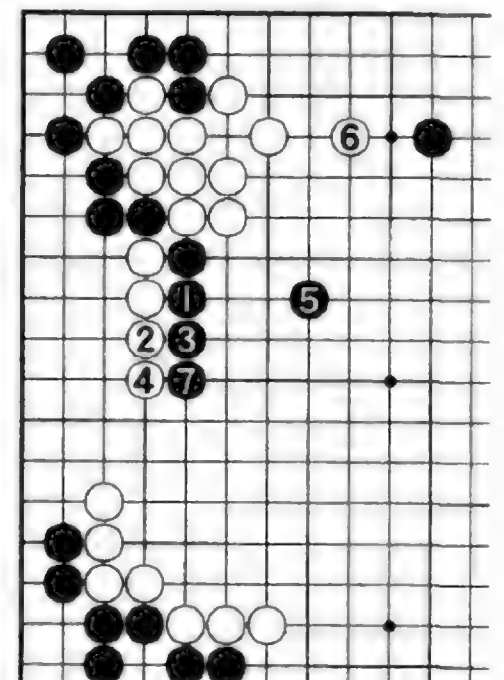
Kobayashi: 'If White encloses around C without exchanging A for B, he can't answer Black's invasion at 2 in Dia. 3 by attaching at 3. The sente move of Black 4 becomes a ladder block, so after 6 to 12, 'a' and 'b' are miai for Black. If the marked exchange in Dia. 4 is in place, Black can't cut at 12 in Dia. 3. This is an efficient result for White. White 56 may be the proper shape, but perhaps it caused White to fall a move behind in the bigger picture.' It seems likely that Otake got distracted by his

puzzling over C and just forgot to make the forcing move.

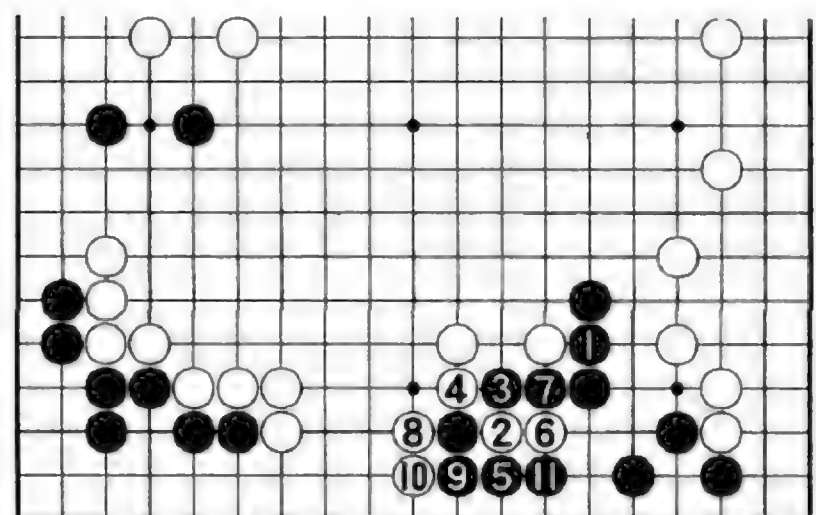
Black seizes the opportunity to drive a sharp wedge through the middle of the white moyo. It's a bold strategy to split up and separate the enemy forces. Kobayashi: 'Instead of 57, I could have developed thickness with 1 to 7 in Dia. 5. Perhaps this was the correct way to play, but the focus of this game is on White's thickness on the bottom left, so I opted for the splitting strategy in the hope of being able to take profit by applying pressure to those stones.' This aim is realized 20 moves later with 77.



Dia. 4



Dia. 5



Dia. 6: too good for White

Black 61. Kobayashi: 'If the White 62-Black 66 exchange had been made, Black would hold back one line with D.' Having played 61, Black answers 62 with 63. If instead Black connects at 1 in Dia. 6, he gets into trouble when White attaches at 2. If he resists with 3 and 5, White gets an excellent forcing sequence to 10, but if Black plays 3 at 5, his shape is ruined after White 6. Kobayashi: 'That means that the sequence to 76 is natural - it's a one-way street.'

Black 77 is a good guess: Black is satisfied with the exchange for 78. This 77 is a good centre move, comparable to Black 63 in Game 4.

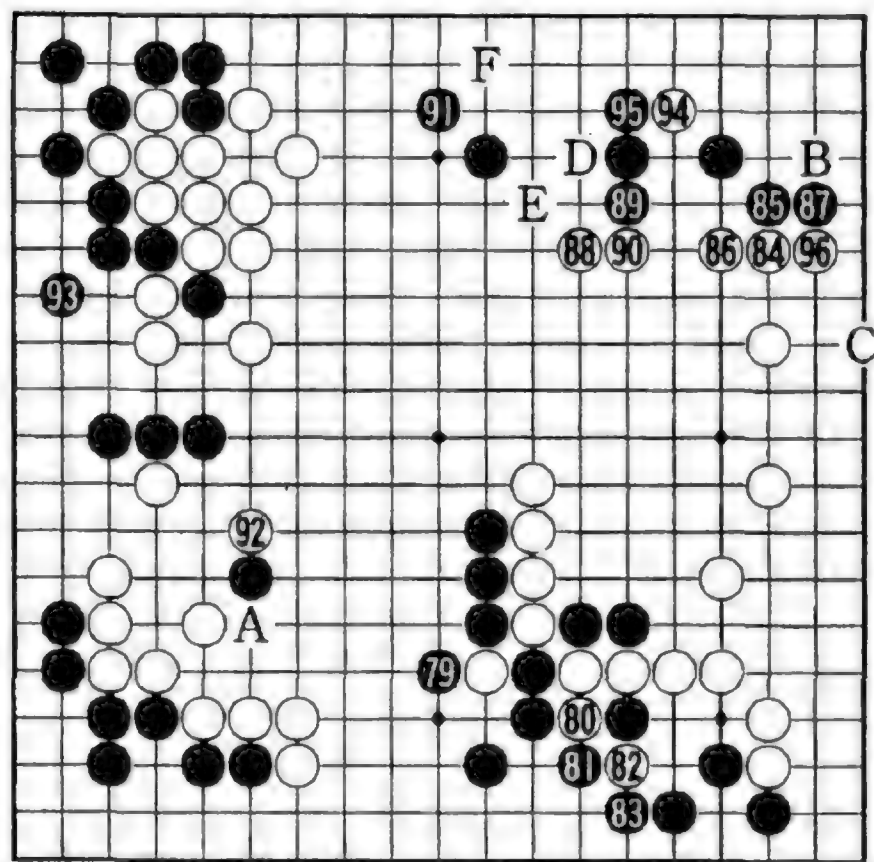
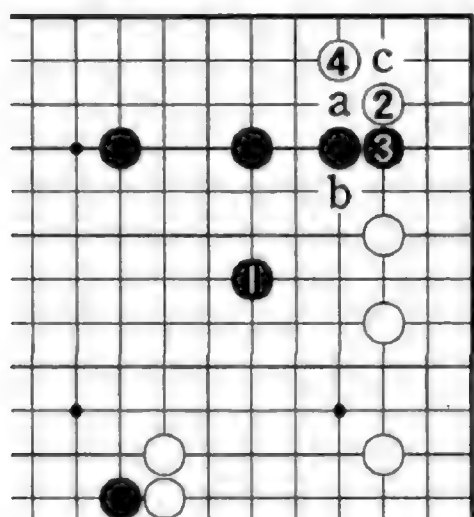


Figure 4 (79-96)



Dia. 7: not to Kobayashi's liking

Figure 4 (79-96). Otake sets about catching up.

Black 79 is solid; it also sets up a good move at A. As Kobayashi had hoped, he looks like taking profit from harassing the white group.

White 84. The sealed move. At this point Kobayashi believed that he was a little ahead.

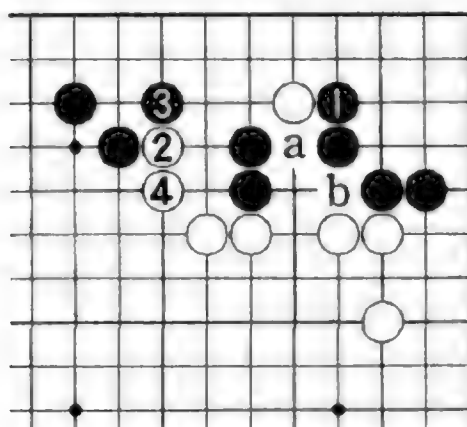
Apparently 84 was a good move: it made Kobayashi spend 75 minutes on his reply. Kobayashi: 'When White extended to 84, I found myself compelled to think. The main point I considered was the comparison between 85 and 1 in Dia. 7. I didn't like the prospect of White's living in the corner with 2 and 4. Yet if Black plays 3 at 'a', White gets too much territory when he connects easily with White 3, Black 'b', White 'c'. Note that Black 85 at B would be too restrained: White is left with White 87, whereas after 85 and 87 in the figure Black gets a big move at C.'

Black 89 and 91 are blunt moves, but they defend against the threat of White D (Black

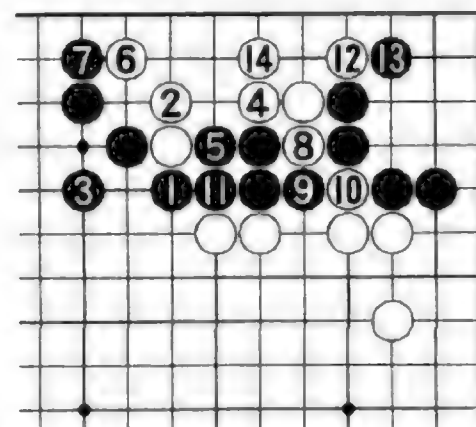
hanes on the third line, White crosscuts). Kobayashi: 'The shape move for defending against the crosscut is 89 at E, but that is slack territorially, as it permits White F'

White's main concern here is to keep sente so that he can switch to 92, forestalling Black A. Black is unable to resist White 92, so he secures a connection along the edge with 93. Otake then plays the sharp combination of 94 and 96. This is the start of a serious attempt to catch up.

White 96 may look like nothing special, but it gave the Meijin quite a jolt. Kobayashi: 'Instead of 95, Black would like to be able to block on the corner side, at 1 in Dia. 8, but then White 2 and 4 become sente, making a difference on the outside.' Black will have to add a stone at 'a' or 'b'. Instead of 3 —



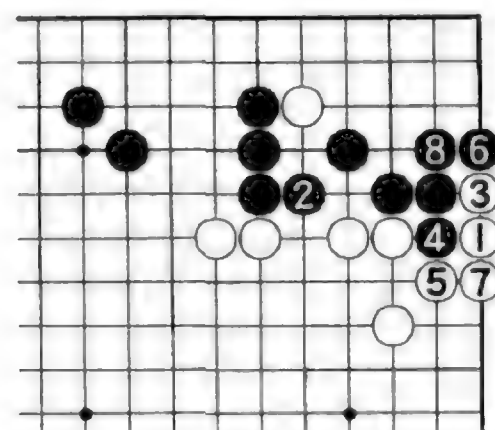
Dia. 8



Dia. 9

Dia. 9. 'If Black tries to kill White with 1 to 5, he finds that he can't do so outright.'

Kobayashi had expected Otake to play 96 at 1 in Dia. 10 and he planned to answer at 2. Black can accept the endgame sequence to 8. In contrast, White gains two points up to 100 in the next figure. Kobayashi had overlooked 96.



Dia. 10

Figure 5 (97-110). The game-losing and the game-winning moves

Black 97. 'If Black tries to fight back with 1 in Dia. 11, White lives in the corner with 2 to 10. Since White has sente moves at 'a' and 'b',

Black can't capture him. Instead of 7 —

'If Black 1 in *Dia. 12*, White counters with 2 to 12. Because of the cutting point at 'a', Black can't try to rescue 3. White lives.'

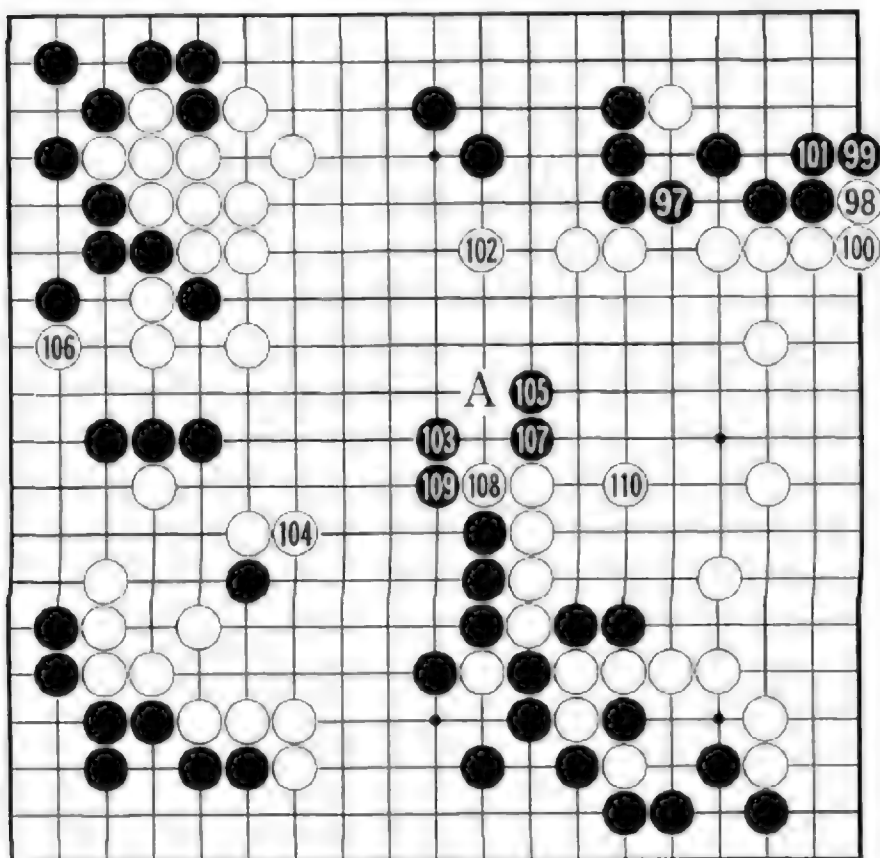
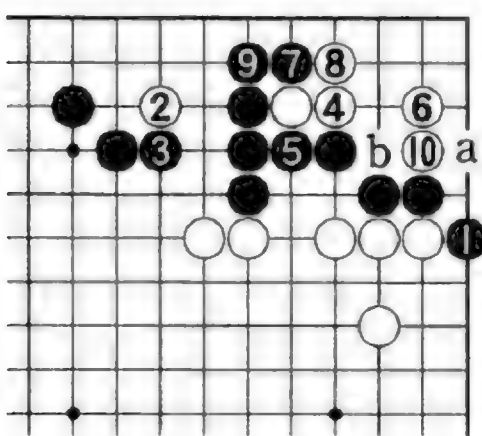
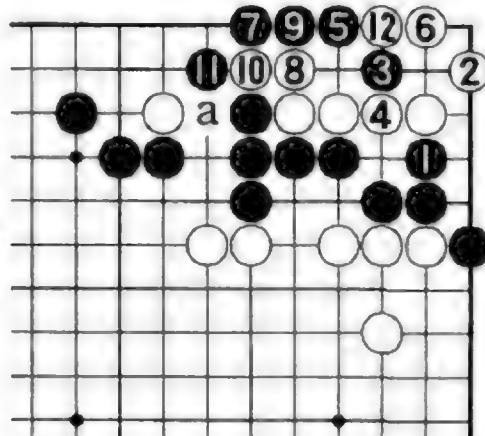


Figure 5 (97-110)



Dia. 11



Dia. 12

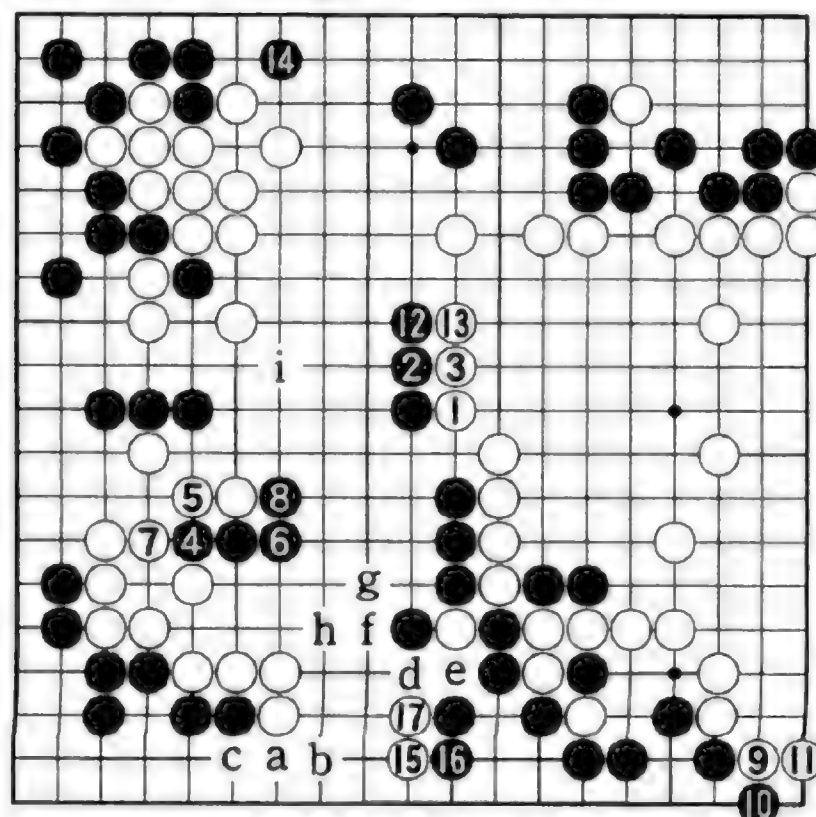
When White hanes and connects in sente on the edge, then jumps out to 102, the game suddenly becomes close. One more move and White will secure a territory of about 60 points on the right side. The players studying the game in the pressroom became animated.

However, Otake made no move to surround the centre. Instead, he extended solidly at 104, posing a threat to the connection between Black's groups to the right and the left.

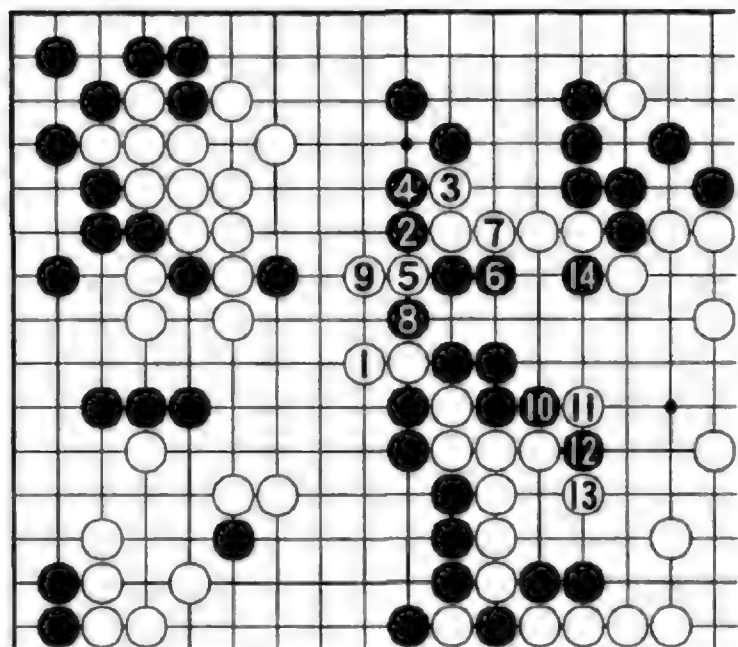
Kobayashi: 'White 104 was the losing move. White should have converted the right side into territory with 1 and 3 in *Dia. 13*. Black will play 4 to 8, making it a tight game. After 17, Black will play Black 'a' through White 'h', securing a small lead. Presumably Otake disliked this development.'

Black 105 is a very resolute move: it looks too deep, but it is decisive. Now the game is

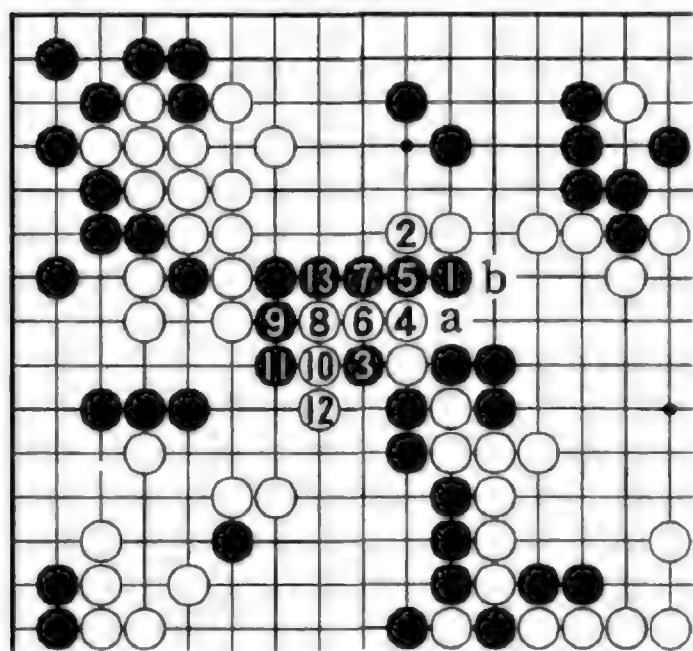
no longer close. Kobayashi: 'I had no confidence of winning with 105 at A.'



tending at 2, Black counters with the 3-5 combination and can't be caught. If White 'a' after 13, Black drops back to 'b', and holes open up in White's position above.'



Dia. 15

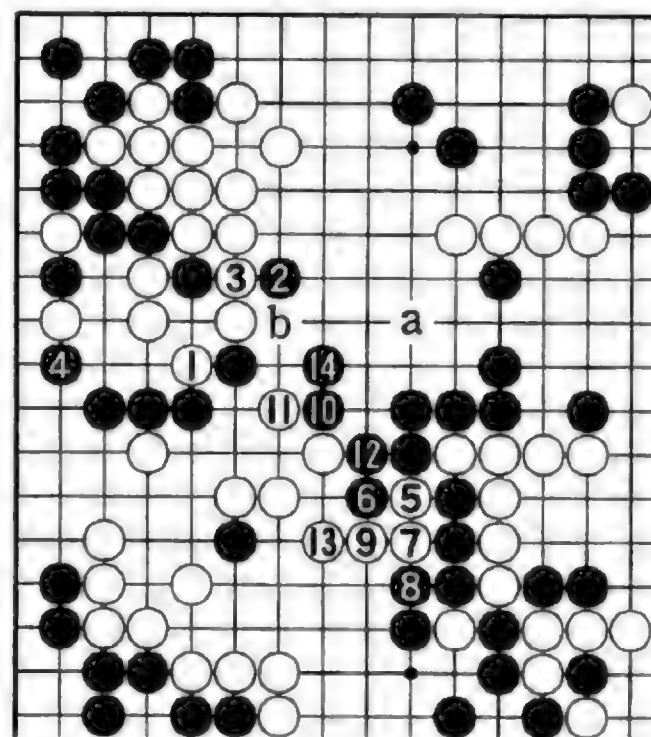


Dia. 16

denly a territory that could have realized 60 points with one extra stone has been whittled down to one in the forties. This decides the game.

White 14 looks dangerous, but Black counters with 15 and 17 and is unworried by the threat of a cut. White's centre strategy has backfired: the marked white stone is crying.

White 20. White might be tempted to try one last attack by playing at 1 in *Dia. 17*, but this doesn't work. Kobayashi: 'Black peeps at 2, then links up with 4. If White cuts at 5, Black saves the group with 6 to 10.' After 14, Black 'a' next makes eye shape, and Black 'b' is sente, threatening to link up, so White can't destroy his eye shape.



Dia. 17: Black can't be killed.

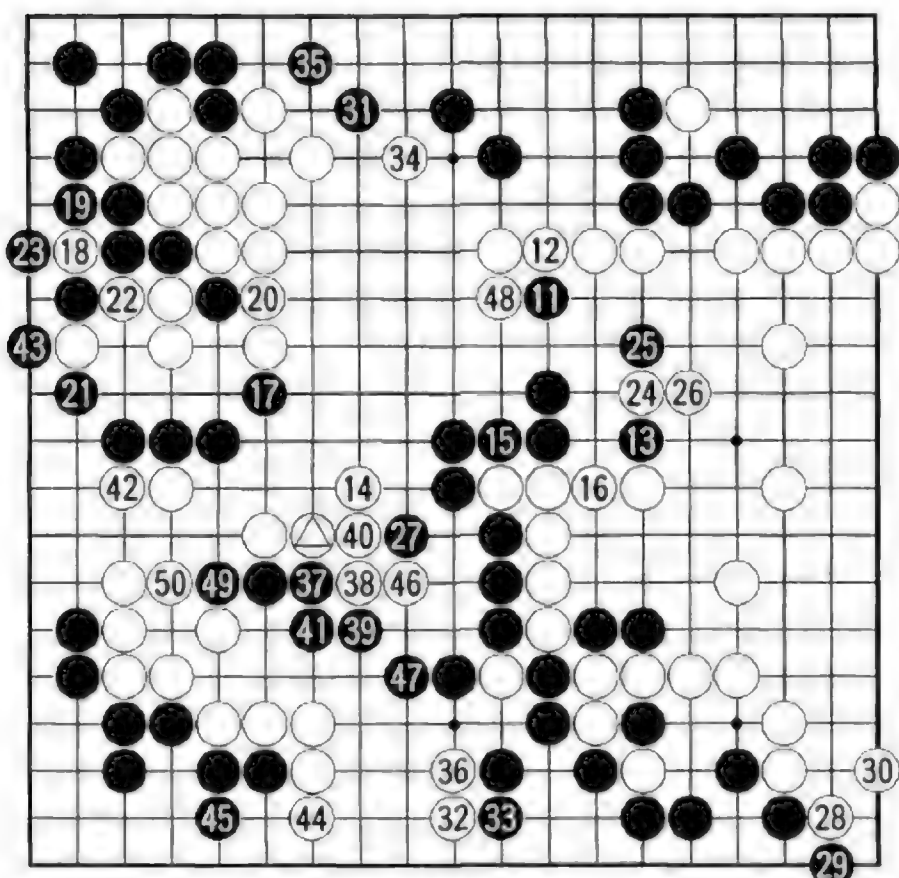


Figure 6 (111-150)

Figure 6 (111-150). White is foiled.

Black attaches persistently at 13, devoting all his energy to reducing this white area. Sud-

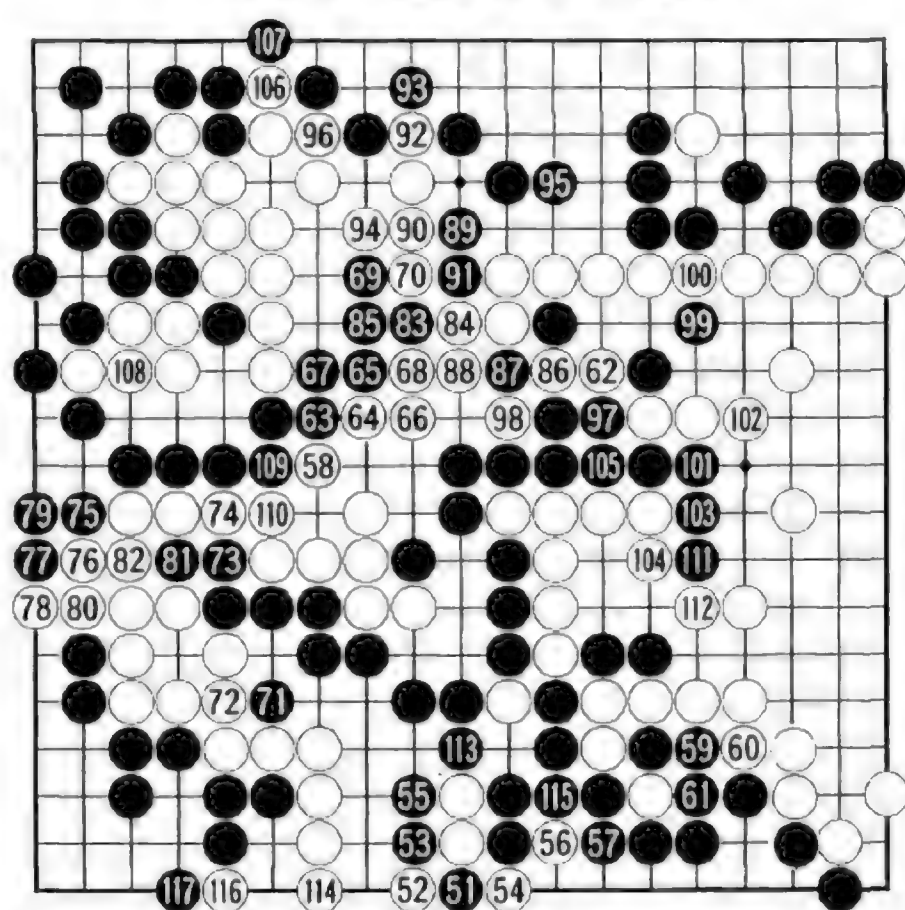


Figure 7 (151-217)

Figure 7 (151-217). A worthy Meijin

When Otake resigned, he was about 13

points behind on the board. Kobayashi thus completed his second successful defence of the Meijin title, but, as we have seen, the series was closer than the score of 4-2 might seem to indicate. Otake came closer to dethroning Kobayashi than he did in the Kisei title, but for that reason he probably has more regrets about the Meijin series.

With his tally of four Meijin titles,

Kobayashi has drawn level with Otake and is only one behind Cho. His more distant target is matching Rin Kaiho's eight Meijin titles. As his success in the Japan-China Meijin playoff held at the end of the year confirms, he is proving to be a worthy Meijin.

White resigns after Black 217.

(Kido, January 1991. Games 2 to 6 translated by John Power.)



Meijin for another year

Meijin Title Holders (Yomiuri)

- 1 (1962). Fujisawa Shuko won 9-3
- 2 (1963). Sakata Eio (d. Fujisawa Shuko 4-3)
- 3 (1964). Sakata (d. Fujisawa Shuko 4-1)
- 4 (1965). Rin Kaiho (d. Sakata 4-2)
- 5 (1966). Rin (d. Sakata 4-1)
- 6 (1967). Rin (d. Sakata 4-1)
- 7 (1968). Takagawa Kaku (d. Rin 4-1)
- 8 (1969). Rin (d. Takagawa 4-2)
- 9 (1970). Fujisawa Shuko (d. Rin 4-2)
- 10 (1971). Rin (d. Fujisawa Shuko 4-2)
- 11 (1972). Rin (d. Fujisawa Shuko 4-2)
- 12 (1973). Rin (d. Ishida Yoshio 4-3)
- 13 (1974). Ishida (d. Rin 4-3)
- 14 (1975). Otake Hideo (d. Ishida 4-3)

Meijin Title Holders (Asahi)

- 1 (1976). Otake (d. Ishida 4-1)
- 2 (1977). Rin (d. Otake 4-0)
- 3 (1978). Otake (d. Rin 4-2)
- 4 (1979). Otake (d. Sakata 4-1)
- 5 (1980). Cho Chikun (d. Otake 4-1)
- 6 (1981). Cho (d. Kato Masao 4-0)
- 7 (1982). Cho (d. Otake 4-1)
- 8 (1983). Cho (d. Otake 4-1)
- 9 (1984). Cho (d. Otake 4-3)
- 10 (1985). Kobayashi Koichi (d. Cho 4-3)
- 11 (1986). Kato (d. Kobayashi 4-0)
- 12 (1987). Kato (d. Rin 4-0)
- 13 (1988). Kobayashi Koichi (d. Kato 4-1)
- 14 (1989). Kobayashi (d. Awaji 4-1)
- 15 (1990). Kobayashi (d. Otake 4-3)

In Pursuit of Elegance

A Survey of the Best in Go Equipment

by John Fairbairn

Part 2: Go Stones

Clause 10 of the official 1949 Nihon Ki-in rules states: 'The stones should be capable of fitting in the spaces between the longitudinal parallel lines. Stones for use on the standard board referred to in Clause 9.1 are normally 7.3 bu [2.21 cm] in diameter. Such stones are referred to as standard stones.'

The rules also state that there should be 181 black stones and 180 white stones. But they say nothing about thickness or material, and as regards shape they say only that they should be round.

As befits what we call these pieces, stone has been used since very early times. The Japanese character for go differs from its Chinese equivalent by incorporating the stone radical instead of the one for wood, and the first occurrence of this character is in the ancient history book *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters) completed in 712. There, an island of molten lava formed by the union of the deities Izanagi and Izanami is called Onogoro-jima ('Spontaneously congealed island'). The 'go' is written with the character for go.¹ There is no connection with the game itself, of course, but since this island is now part of Japan, we might have been able to say Japan truly was the land of go had not Marco Polo interfered with his Zipangu!

What is surprising about the use of stones, perhaps, is that a material so difficult to work with should be used for a game requiring so many pieces. More remarkable is the fact that rare stones from almost inaccessible areas have often been chosen. This has led some to wonder whether go pieces were originally so chosen because they had a more esteemed purpose such as divination, or whether the game was restricted to a very small circle of rich aristocrats.

We must, however, be careful not to assume that other materials were not used for go pieces. Apart from the Chinese character for go

with the wood radical (which may simply refer to the board), there is an otherwise unexplained character, *ku*, with the wood radical, first in the *Bo Yi Lun* (Discourse on Playing Go) by Wei Yao of Wu times (222–277) then in the *Qijing Shisan Pian* (Go Classic in 13 Chapters) by Zhang Ni about 900 years later². It appears to refer to go stones. Unaware of its use, the great sinologue Bernhard Karlgren, in his *Grammatica Serica*, could only suggest it was a kind of tree. (The three characters mentioned above are shown in Fig. 1 — *ku* now means 'withered' or 'seasoned'.)

碁

(a)

棋

(b)

枯

(c)

Figure 1

(a) Japanese character for go — the stone radical (石) is at the bottom.

(b) Older character, still used in Chinese and Sino-Japanese. The wood radical (木) is at the left but formerly was at the bottom.

(c) Character *ku* of unknown meaning in go — first appears in phrase 枯棋三百.

Nevertheless, we do know that stone was used in China for go pieces (and boards) in earliest times for both sides — not necessarily black and white. Red and green have been used, for example. Jade was probably used for one side, even though this had to be imported from Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, or North Burma. Even today the finest Chinese stones are of Yunnan marble.

Japanese Stones

The first 'stones' used in Japan, those in the Shosoin in Nara (see photo at end of article) were of thin ivory and jadeite, though at least one set is red and black. We just do not know when slate and shell took over, although it is not surprising that they did.

The slate for the black stones originally came from a site near Osaka famous already in

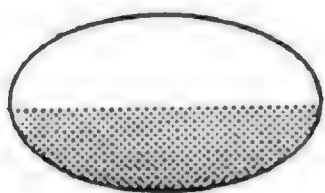


Figure 2a
Kamaboko



Figure 2b
Abacus bead

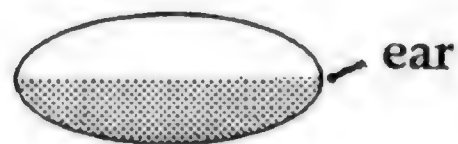


Figure 2c
Honinbo

ancient times among makers of arrowheads. This is near the Wada Pass in Nagano Prefecture. Slate of this type is now known as *nachi-ishi* or *nachi-guro*.

For the white stones shell was a convenient material, since the clam hamaguri (*Meretrix meretrix lusoria*) has long been a staple part of the Japanese diet, and until recently large shells have been abundant. These were used over 1,000 years ago for the shell-matching game *kai-awase* or *kai-oi* in which the top and bottom couplets of a poem were written in each of the bi-valves.

It seems safe to infer, therefore, that slate and shell were used for go in Japan from very early times. China appears to have had a more eclectic approach to materials for go pieces and had ranged from glass, clay, and wood (including bamboo) to gold and silver.

Go stones of whatever material not only have to be convenient to handle but must also fit the boards available. Since go boards have usually had standard dimensions for long periods, there has been little scope for variation in the stones.

However, although Chinese stones have generally been flat on one side and convex on the other (giving rise to the practice where a player places a piece upside down to show he is thinking about that move, then turns it over if he is happy with it), Japanese stones have generally been biconvex.

Japanese stones have also varied greatly in thickness — or appearance of thickness. This is how the three types of go stones are differentiated. The thickest looking is the kamaboko type (Fig. 2a), named after the balls of boiled fish-paste widely used in Japanese cooking. Here the 'ears' of the stones are well rounded to make the stone look thicker. The second type is the abacus bead (Fig. 2b) with rather sharp ears. The third type, the Honinbo stone (Fig. 2c), is midway between these two.

The Shosoin stones are about 1.6 cm in diameter and 0.8 cm thick, but for ancient

boards of native manufacture the white stones were 7 bu [2.12 cm] in diameter. Black stones were 7.2 bu [2.18 cm] across, being larger to take account of the differing optical effects of black and white.³ Nowadays, dimensions are 7.2 and 7.3 bu [2.21] respectively.

The standard thickness is 3 bu [0.91 cm] but commonly varies between 2.7 and 3.8 bu [0.82 and 1.15 cm], and the black stones are a fraction larger (between 0.3 and 0.6 mm) in this dimension too. Occasionally stones of 4 bu [1.21 cm] or even more might be found. At the other end of the scale, stones 2.3 bu [0.7 cm] thin are on sale. The thicker stones are much more expensive.

In shops, incidentally, expect to see stones sold according to a non-standard bu linear number system of measuring thickness where the usual range runs from No. 25 (0.7cm) to No. 40 (1.15 cm), with the top of the scale normally at No. 45 (1.30 cm). Each step on this scale is 0.1 bu apart.

Materials for Modern Stones

The black stones of Japan use the still abundant *nachi-guro* slate mined in Wakayama Prefecture, but for the white stones it is becoming increasingly difficult to find the right kind of shell. The hamaguri clams whose shells are used are abundant enough, but in Japan's overfished waters it is now hard to find clams which are old enough to have the thick shells used for the bigger stones. A hamaguri clam normally lives 10 years. To reach a shell thickness of 3.5 bu, though, it has to live 15 years!⁴

The response to the shortage has been either to intensify the fishing — or to try different types of shell, notably the Mexican clam.

The best clam shells, like the best kaya trees and again because of the beneficial Kuroshio current, come from Miyazaki Prefecture in Kyushu. They are known locally as *suwabute* but elsewhere as *Hyuga hamaguri* (*Hyuga* = *Miyazaki*) or *go-ishi hamaguri* ('go stone clams').

In Edo times, good shells were obtained from Mikawa in Shizuoka Prefecture or Kujukurihama in Chiba Prefecture, and in Kamakura times shells from the Kamakura sea shore were particularly prized, but the Hyuga clams from the long, sandy coast at Okuragahama were found around the turn of the century to give the thickest stones. Today Miyazaki dominates the industry.

The Hyuga clams are classified into three grades: snow, moon, and flower, in descending order of quality. All are basically white but have a tinge of redness that is esteemed because it makes the stones look warm and lustrous.

A single clam gives at most two and often only one 'snow' stone in which the grain is straight and fine. The grain in 'moon' stones is curved and coarser, with thinner grain lines, which tends to make them look brighter than 'snow' stones. 'Flower' stones look nearest to pure white and show little grain, if any, and what they do show is curved.

Stones of the type described above — made from native clams — are referred to on the box as 'special produce of Hyuga' (*Hyuga tokusan*). Distinguish very carefully from 'special manufacture of Hyuga' (*Hyuga tokusei*) which denotes stones made in Hyuga but from the shell of the Mexican clam. One useful distinction is that with the Mexican clams the Flower grade is always called the 'utilitarian' (*jitsuyo*) grade instead.

The 'special produce' is now rare and very expensive. 'Special manufacture' stones are today's norm — but not to be despised even in their own right. Their attraction grows even more once you learn that they are 20 to 30 times cheaper!

The Mexican clam, from Baja California peninsula, has been used since 1920, when it was discovered on a beach there by a Japanese sailor who was also a go-stone maker. Immediately after manufacture, the Mexican clam stones are more lustrous and stronger grained than the Japanese variety, but they lack the tinge of redness of the latter and their edges are more brittle. Moreover, while the grain of the Japanese variety is more subdued, the grain lines are much more numerous. Another drawback of the Mexican variety is that after long use the lustre fades and turns yellow,

whereas hamaguri retains its colour with age. In favour of the Mexican clam is the fact that it gives thicker stones, but it has to be said that signs of overfishing are now apparent here too. There are, however, related species of clam in Taiwan, South China, the Philippines and India which may provide alternative sources.

Incidentally, the grain of a hamaguri or Mexican clam appears on one side only (and that is the side that should appear face up when the stone is played), which is the easiest way to distinguish these shells from another that is sometimes used, the squilla or giant clam — the biggest in the world — which grows in the waters off Taiwan and Okinawa to a width of one metre and weight of 250 kilos.

Apart from the double-sided grain, stones from the squilla are very similar to those from the Mexican clam, with the same drawbacks except that they are more durable (though much harder to work).

Manufacture of Stones

The very best shell stones are still hand made, but most are now machined. The difference, as I understand it, is simply that machines are weaker than humans at coping with the tapering thickness of a shell and produce sets of stones that differ slightly in thickness. The human set is supposed to be quite uniform.

In hand manufacture, square lumps are cut out of the shell (or slate) with a chisel, then further chiseled until they are in almost the finished shape. Using machines, a circular slug is first drilled out.

The prepared slugs are then slotted one at a time into a special holder by which the artisan polishes them up and down the runnels of a whetstone (*Fig. 3*). Water is used in the grinding process in such large amounts as to be a source of local pollution. For this reason, go-stone workshops have moved away from areas of dense population.

Care of Stones

Slate stones should be kept lightly oiled with a mineral oil. Shell stones, being weak to acids and alkalis, should be coated with Chinese tree wax (*ibota-ro*). The coating should be renewed every five years. If they get dirty

they should be placed on a vinyl mat and rubbed with a moist cloth. Never rinse them in water. They should be kept inside a soft cloth in their containers.



Figure 3

Part 3: Go Bowls

Bowls to contain go stones are made of mulberry, cherry, zelkova (*keyaki*), persimmon, enju (*Sophara japonica*), ebony, sandalwood, chestnut, Chinese quince, maple, ash . . . you name it. Before the war, lacquer-ware was also used, often decorated with gold and silver filigree, and indeed this was the norm up to about 1910 when wood started to take over.

The best bowls today are mulberry, followed by zelkova and cherry. The quality of a bowl is judged by its appearance (colour and grain), resistance to long use, and the sound it makes in contact with stones, metallic noises being regarded with particular disfavour.

The best mulberry, *shimaguwa* or 'island mulberry', comes from the Izu Isles, notably Miyake and Mikura Islands. When new, mulberry bowls are light golden but tend, after about 30 years, to go brown. Nevertheless, they retain their sparkle, and the association of their colour and the colour of the shell stones is especially popular.

Next best to mulberry, though not much used now, is persimmon, especially if it is the 'black' persimmon that comes from the heart of

the tree. If particular emphasis is put on the grain, cherry (the best being reddish) might be preferred. Zelkova and enju are also reasonable woods, but all others have drawbacks. For instance, black ebony is very hard and gives a metallic sound. Red sandalwood has the same demerit. With these woods, rush or felt inserts have to be placed inside the bowls. Being dark, their resin can also stain the white stones. If ebony is used, however, pure black is not popular: wood with whitish stripes is preferred. Rosewood, an inferior but cheaper version of red sandalwood, has recently found its adherents too.

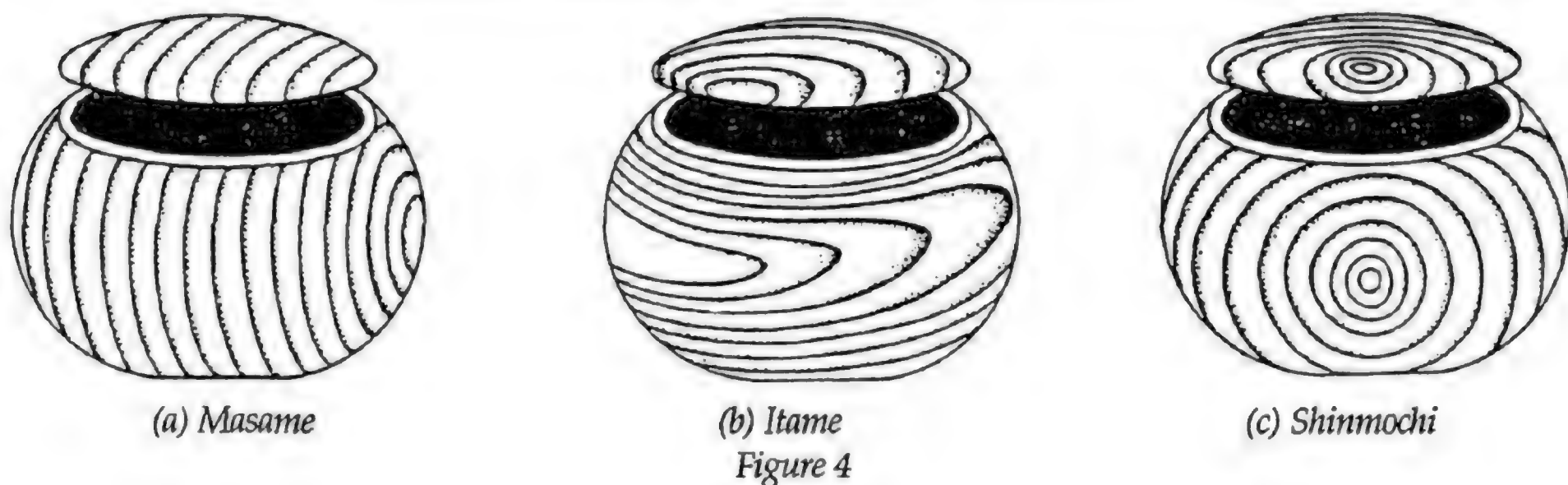
The cheapest wooden bowls are made of chestnut. However, it should be avoided for good stones as it can stain them. It is also brittle. It is, incidentally, the resin problem that stops the yellow-staining *kaya* being used.

Surprisingly, bamboo is rarely used, even though it seem to be used for everything else in Japan and needs no turning. It was commoner in Edo times, however. In those days the lowest priced stone containers were *zaru* — small baskets woven from bamboo which were normally a kitchenware item. From this came the term *zaru-go* to describe 'poor go', in both senses. I suppose the modern equivalent is Tupperware go.

Design of Bowls

Bowls are sometimes carved but are generally turned, so there is little to say about that. As to the all-important grain there are three types: straight grain (*masame*), irregular grain (*itame*) and whorled (*shinmochi*) — see Fig. 4. Straight grain is the best. Irregular grain (also known as *koguchi-tori*) is next best. Whorled types are inferior because they crack and warp more easily, especially in the case of chestnut.

The size of bowls varies according to the thickness of the stones, but in general they are about 12 cm high and 14 cm in diameter. One school of thought is that bowls that just take the full quantity of stones are most appropriate, which means that the bowls for black stones should be slightly larger. Another view is that bowls should be the same size and big enough that the black stones fill about 80% of the capacity. Either way, the lids should be a tightish fit.



Bowl sizes are graded rather like underwear — small, medium, large, very large, and extra large. As a rough guide, extra large is needed for stone sizes no. 36 to 40, very large for No. 30 to 35, and medium for No. 25 to 33.

In shape bowls vary enormously, which I will not go into as I am not aware that any is considered better than the others. Fig. 5 illustrates some types (an *inro* is the lacquer box that used to be tucked by men into the sash round their kimono — a sort of clutch bag).

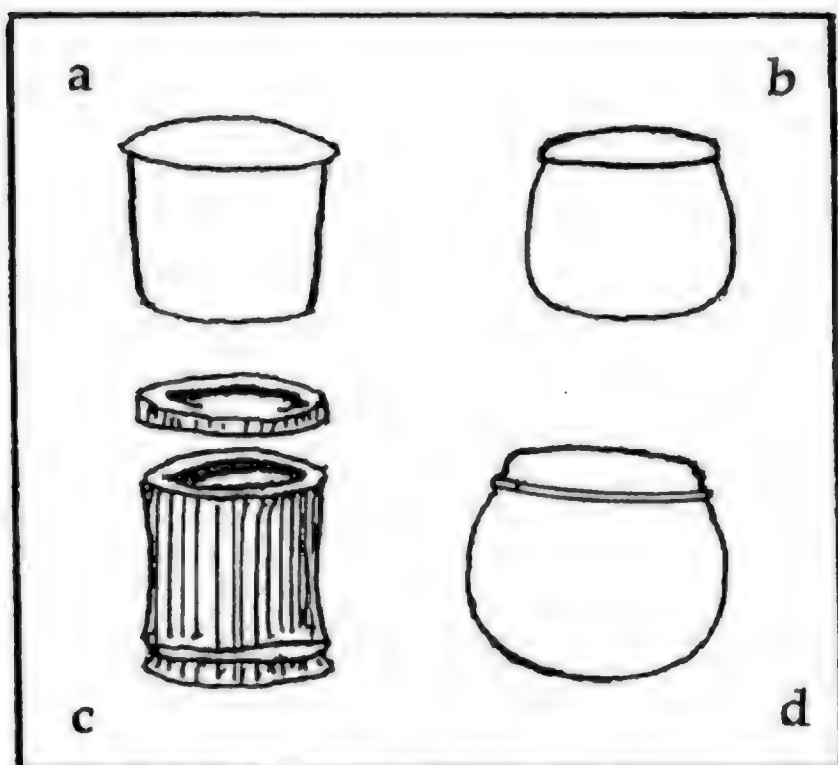


Figure 5

(a) Old style; (b) Modern style;
(c) Bamboo; (d) Inro type (modern)

Care of Bowls

Good bowls should be kept in a paulownia box after first being wrapped in a cloth. This is especially important for mulberry, which is easily affected by heat. The commonest problem is dirt, especially cigarette ash, getting inside the bowls. It doesn't do the bowls any harm but it stains the stones.

Always lift the bowls with two hands. During a game with a traditional board, the

bowl should be placed between and forward of your knees with the lid kept on the floor at the bottom right corner in full view of the opponent.

Notes

(1) See *Kodai Igo no Sekai (The Ancient World Of Go)* by Watanabe Yoshimitsu, San'ichi Shobo, Tokyo 1977, page 5, for more details. The Kojiki reference is in Vol. I, Sect. III.

(2) In *Bo Yi Lun* the text is '300 go pieces'. These works are not published on their own but in anthologies. Out of confusion, the editors of the anthologies sometimes emend the character *ku* to the meaningless particle *fu*.

(3) For some fascinating information on old stones, linguistic and archaeological, see *Go* by Masukawa Koichi, Hosei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, Tokyo 1987, especially pp. 185-7.

(4) For full details of *hamaguri* in English, see *Clam Culture in Japan*, A.R. Cahn, Natural Resources Section, GHSCAP, Report No. 146, Tokyo 1951.

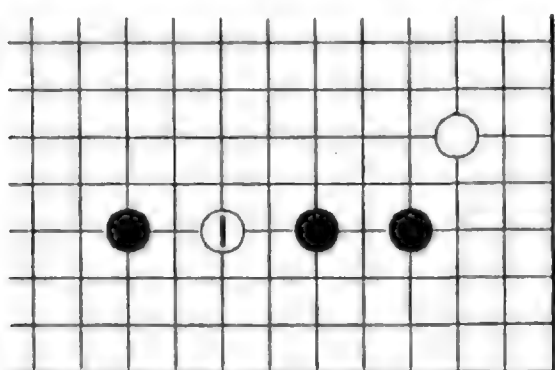


36 Tesuji Patterns

Eio Sakata, Hon. Honinbo

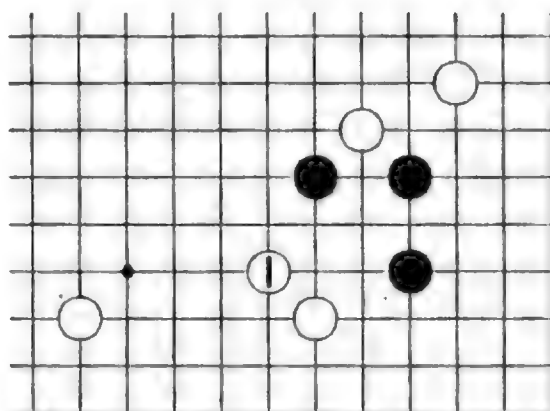
This is the final instalment in this series. We hope that the range of tesujis we have covered has helped the reader to improve his fighting ability and increased his self-confidence.

The three problems in this issue are ones that come up frequently in the late fuseki or early middle game when White tries to attack a strong black corner position. Black must not let White take an unfair advantage.



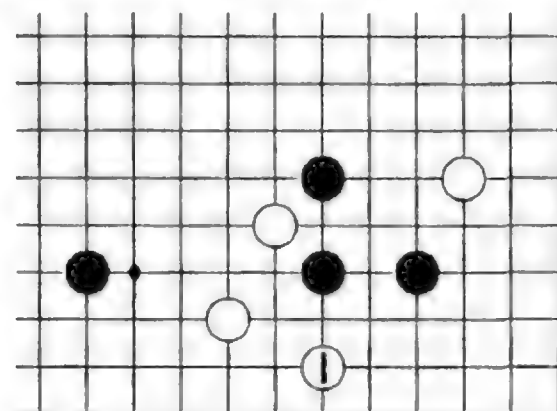
Pattern 34. Black to play

White often invades at 1 in handicap games, especially six-stone games and up. What is Black's answer and what are the reasons for it?



Pattern 35. Black to play

How should Black fix the gap in his defences after White plays 1?



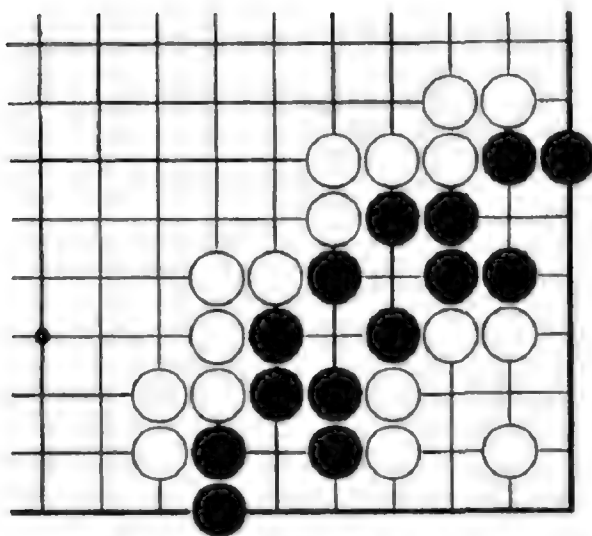
Pattern 36. Black to play.

White 1 is a troublesome move, but when he answers Black should be thinking of attack rather than defence.

Answers on page 70.

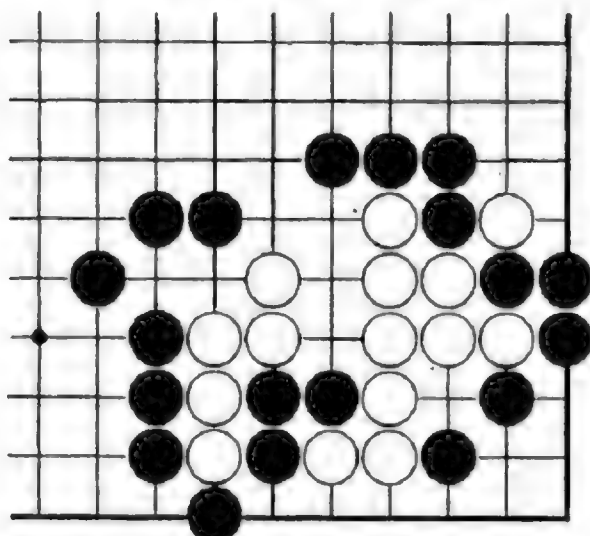
36 Life and Death Patterns

Kato Masao 9-dan



Pattern 34. Black to play

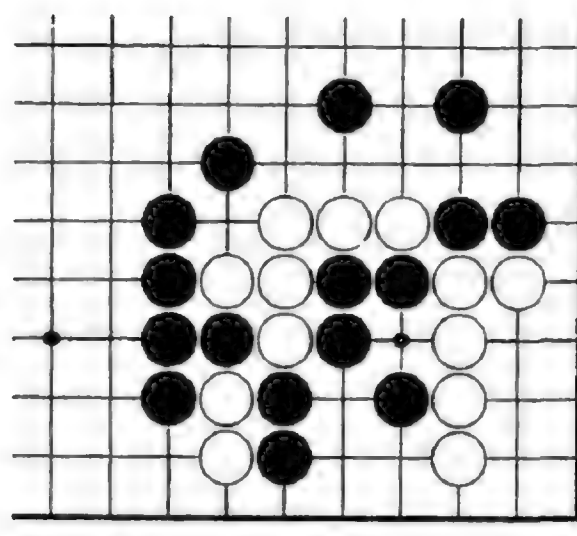
If Black doesn't find a clever move, the best he can do is to get one eye in gote. The only way to live is to exploit the weakness in White's shape.



Pattern 35. White to play

Some preparation is necessary before White can make two eyes. He is relying on the fact that White has bad aji in the corner and to the left.

Answers on page 71.



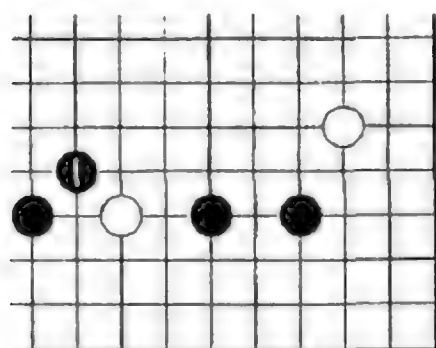
Pattern 36. White to play.

Can White save his six cut-off stones in the centre? To do so, he will have to find a tesuji that makes use of the aji of his other two stones.

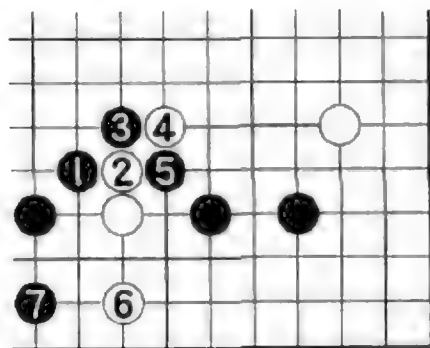
36 Tesuji Patterns: Answers

Answer to Pattern 34

Dia. 1. The answer is the kosumi of 1. This move looks simple, but you have to understand the strategy behind it. In short, Black regards his two corner stones as thickness and wants to push White towards them, following the proverb, 'use thickness to attack'.



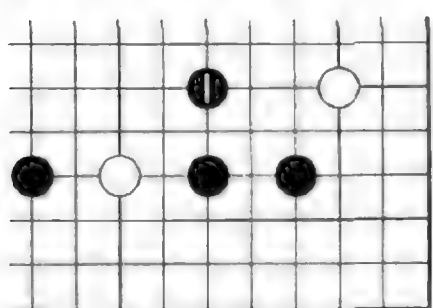
Dia. 1: correct



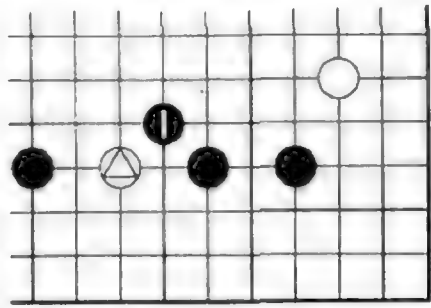
Dia. 2: attack

Dia. 2. If White 2, Black attacks with 3 on. The continuation is a matter of technique, which we will leave you to practise yourself.

Dia. 3. Jumping to 1 may also be a good move, depending on the overall position. Since it keeps the white stones separated, it aims at attacking on both sides.



Dia. 3: possible

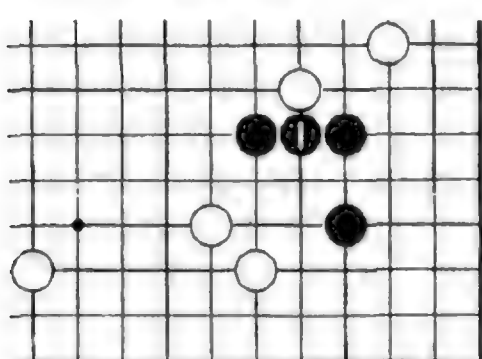


Dia. 4: wrong direction

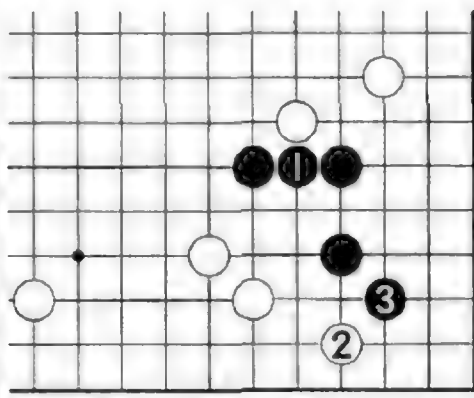
Dia. 4. Black 1, attacking from a strong position, goes against the logic of go. The marked white stone becomes light, so it's easier for White to settle it or discard it without getting into the fight in Dia. 2.

Answer to Pattern 35

Dia. 1. Connecting at 1 is the best and simplest move. It may seem submissive, but Black can be satisfied with his thickness. He can now aim at attacking the white stones on the right side.



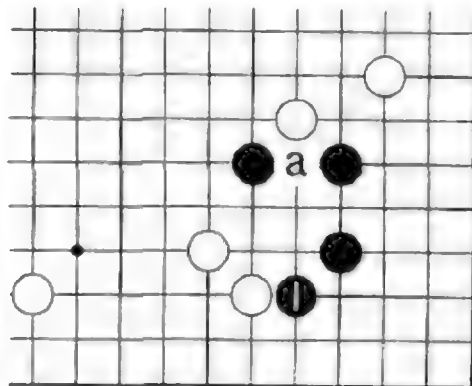
Dia. 1: correct



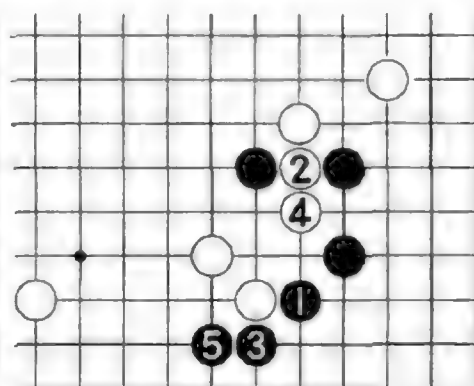
Dia. 2: necessary

Dia. 2. If White 2, Black must defend the corner with 3: this is the vital point for securing a base for both sides. The black group is now in no danger of coming under attack.

Dia. 3. Black may try to gain efficiency by attaching at 1. This move is not out of the question, but it leaves the gap at 'a', so —



Dia. 3: dubious

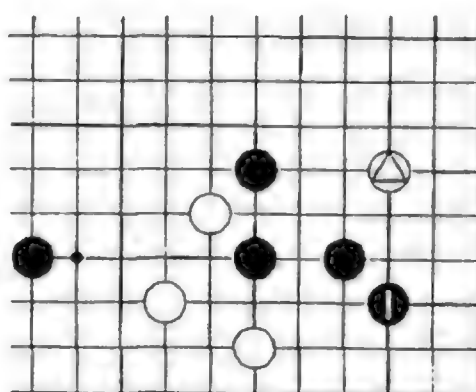


Dia. 4: white thickness

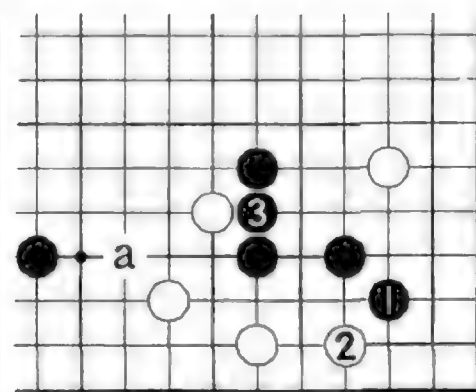
Dia. 4. Depending on the overall position, White may exercise his option of pushing down at 2. Black's counter is to hane at 3, but White may give up the side territory in return for thickness in the centre. Black has to bear this possibility in mind when he plays 1.

Answer to Pattern 36

Dia. 1. Black secures a base with 1. This is not a passive move, because it also deprives White of the chance of making a base and so aims at attacking him. The marked white stone now looks insecure.



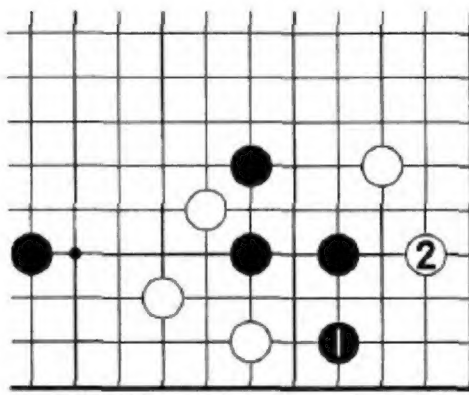
Dia. 1: correct



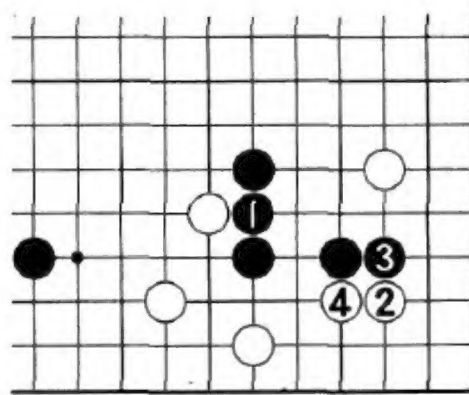
Dia. 2: solid

Dia. 2. White 2 is not a threat: Black ignores it in favour of connecting solidly at 3. This makes miai of attacking at 'a' and attacking the solitary white stone on the right side. Black always has his mind on attack.

Dia. 3. Black 1 fails to defend the corner, as White will immediately point out by running in at 2. Black fails because he is thinking of defence whereas 1 in Dia. 1 is thinking of attack.



Dia. 3: wrong



Dia. 4: loses points

Dia. 4. Black 1 misses the target. White takes profit with 2 and 4 and is satisfied.

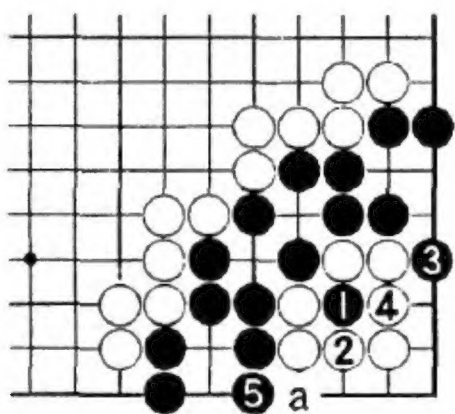
(*Let's Go*, December 1983)

36 Life and Death Patterns: Answers

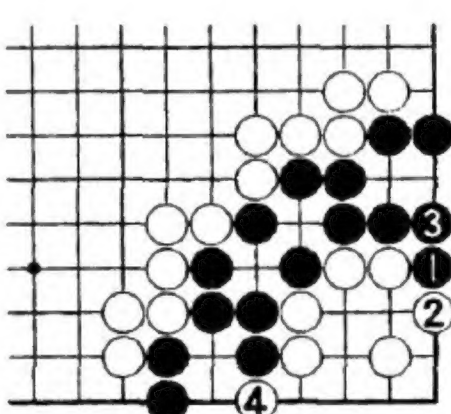
Answer to Pattern 34

Dia. 1. Black 1 follows the proverb, 'play at the centre of a symmetrical shape'. If White 2, Black 3 becomes sente, so Black secures an eye in sente on the side. That gives him time to make his second eye with 5. If White 2 at 4, Black ataris at 'a' and lives in similar fashion.

Black 1 is a very effective cut. At all stages of the game, from josekis to the endgame, a cut can help you by creating useful aji.



Dia. 1: Black lives

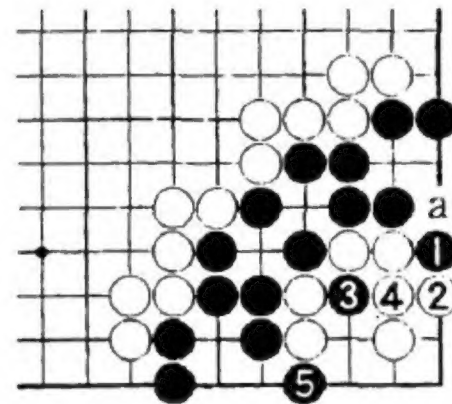


Dia. 2: wrong

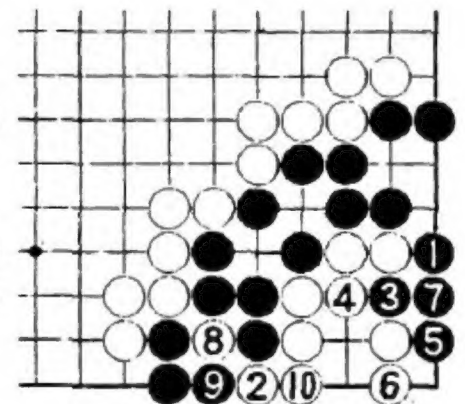
Dia. 2. If Black neglects to make the cut, securing an eye with 3 becomes gote, so the group dies after 4. However, White 2 and Black 3 here are both mistakes. Black gets a chance to live with 3.

Dia. 3. Instead of connecting at 'a', Black can still cut at 3. White 4 is forced, so Black secures an eye in sente with 5, giving him time to connect at 'a' for his second eye.

Dia. 4. The correct answer to 1 is to hane at 2, destroying the eye on the edge. Black 3 and 5 aim at a ko, but because of Black's shortage of liberties White doesn't need to fight it. He calmly answers at 6, as he can catch some stones with 8 and 10.



Dia. 3: second chance



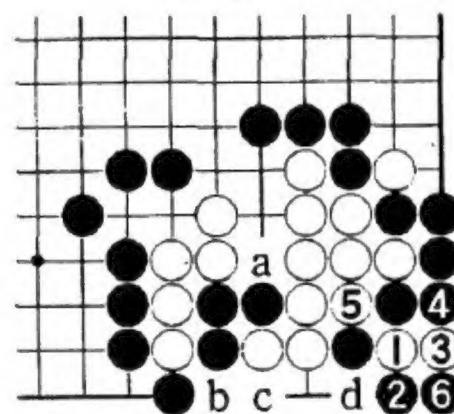
Dia. 4: Black dies

Answer to Pattern 35

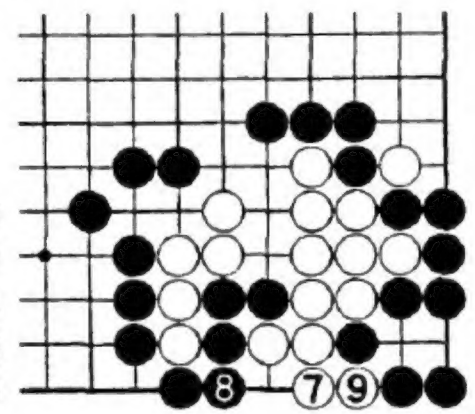
Dia. 1. Attaching at 1 is the key move, though it is only the first step towards the solution. The idea is to lead Black into shortage of liberties by sacrificing two stones. When White ataris at 5, Black must capture at 6.

It's now time to have a good look at the aji on the bottom edge. The blunt sequence of White 'a', Black 'b', White 'c' would just let this aji go to waste. The best White could do next would be to get a ko by throwing in at 'd'.

Note that if White uses 1 to make a placement at 2 or 3, Black has a good answer in 1, so White gets nowhere.



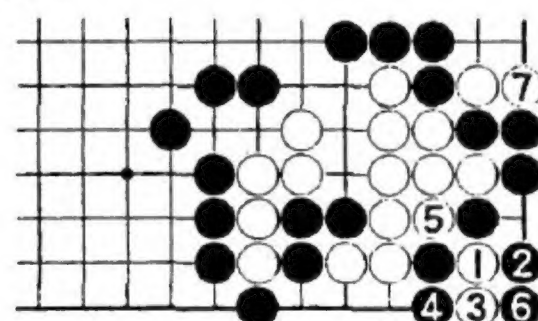
Dia. 1: the first step



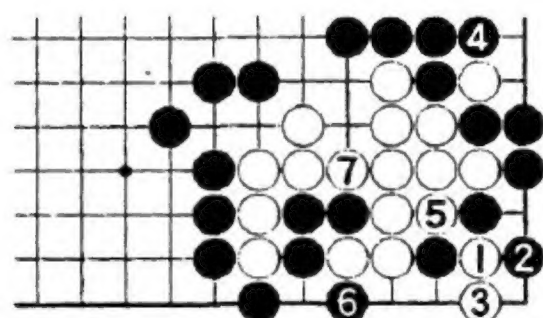
Dia. 2: alive

Dia. 2. Descending at 7 is best. Black must play 8, to prevent White from capturing his stones with a throw-in there, so White ataris at 9. This sets up an *oi-otoshi* capture in the corner, so White lives.

Dia. 3. Black's atari at 2 is bad style: it makes living a lot easier for White. After White 3 to Black 6, White captures everything with 7. Instead of 4 —



Dia. 3: bad style



Dia. 4: White lives

Dia. 4. Black may backtrack at 4, hoping at least to get a ko after 5, but here too White doesn't need to fight it. He easily gets an eye in the centre with 7.

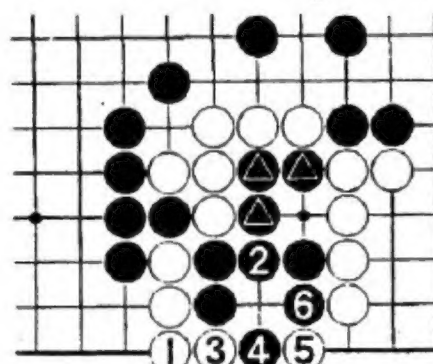
Answer to Pattern 36

Dia. 1. The only way to save the centre stones is to make full use of the other 'captured' stones. First, White descends to 1. If you can find this move, you are halfway to the solution. Black's best answer is to connect at 2: the second half of the solution is discovering how to counter this. White turns at 3, leading to a ko. This is best for both. Any move but 1 will lead nowhere; any answer but 2 will let White capture the three marked stones because of Black's shortage of liberties.

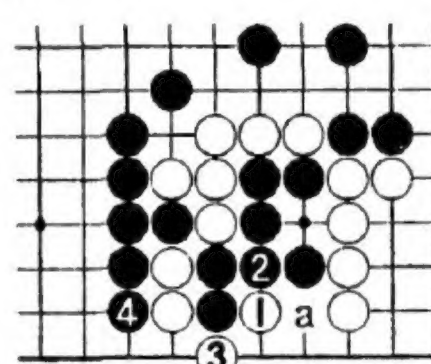
Dia. 2. The crude move of 1 doesn't work because of White's own shortage of liberties. After 4 White can't save his two stones. White

1 at 'a' lets Black capture with 4.

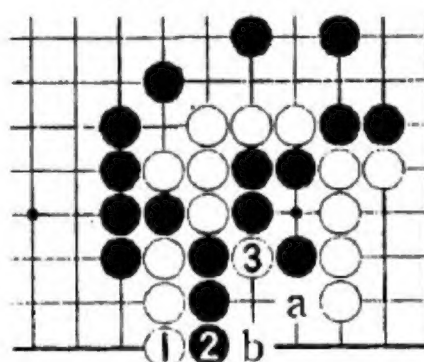
Dia. 3. If Black answers 1 by blocking at 2, White will be happy. Please confirm for yourself that he now captures the three stones after his throw-in at 3. Black 2 at 'a' also fails when White makes a placement at 'b'.



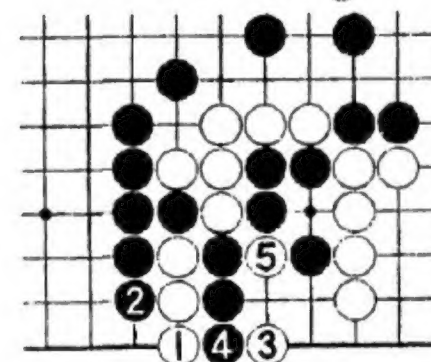
Dia. 1: correct



Dia. 2: wrong



Dia. 3: wrong for Black



Dia. 4: wrong for Black

Dia. 4. If Black blocks on the outside at 2, White counters with 3. If Black 4, White throws in at 5 and captures the three stones. Dias. 3 and 4 show why Black must connect at 2 in Dia. 1.

(*Let's Go*, December 1983)

Go World News (continued)

Women's Meijin Match Tied

The 3rd Women's Meijin title match, in which the veteran player Sugiuchi Kazuko 8-dan is challenging Aoki Kikuyo 3-dan, is tied 1-1. Sugiuchi took the first game, played on 17 January, but Aoki fought back in the second (6 February).

Until last year, this tournament was the only professional tournament in Japan run by the Swiss system, but from the 3rd term it has switched to the same system as the Judan title. Sixteen players who have won their way through the qualifying tournament compete in a knockout tournament. Losers move over to a parallel knockout tournament, where they are eliminated completely if they lose again. The winner of the winners' block then meets the winner of the losers' block in a playoff to

decide the challenger. Sugiuchi lost to Ogawa Tomoko in the winners' block, but resurfaced and beat her in the playoff.

Ma wins 3rd Mingren Title

As reported earlier in our news section, Ma lost the Japan-China Meijin playoff. The result of the Chinese Mingren (= Meijin) title match was a 3-1 victory for him over the challenger Yu Bin. Yu started well by winning the first two games in the best-of-five title match, played in Beijing from 18 to 26 October 1990, but Ma then switched to more aggressive play and won three games in a row. This is Ma's second Mingren title — last year he defeated Liu Xiaoguang 3-0. Yu Bin lost the 1st Mingren title match 1-3 to Liu.

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